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THE BRITISH ARMY IN 1875.

JOHN HOLMS, M.P.

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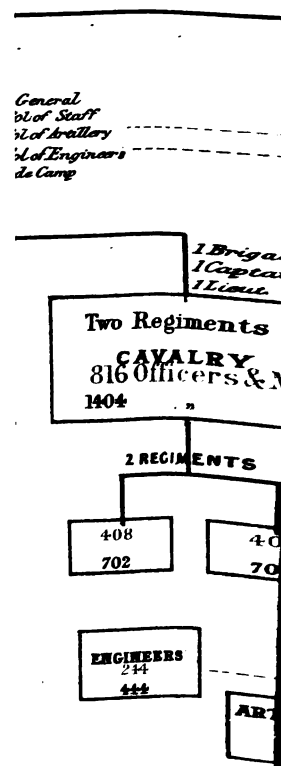

THE BRITISH ARMY

IN

1875

WITH SUGGESTIONS

ON ITS ADMINISTRATION AND ORGANISATION

BY

JOHN HOLMS, M.P.

BIBLIOTHECA BODLEIANA

NEW EDITION, with ADDITIONS

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1876

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PREFACE.

As I cannot lay claim to the experience of a military authority, it is naturally with much diffidence that I venture to offer the following pages to the public as my humble contribution towards the solution of a great and important question, and in hope that business men, by the light of some plain facts and the application of some sound principles, may think for themselves, and be induced to take an interest in the question of Army Reform. They will see clearly that it is neither more men nor more money that we want, but simply common sense management and sound organisation.

I should greatly rejoice if I could conscientiously advocate our having no standing army

at all, and agree that we should trust only to our fleet. But when we see the huge armaments of Europe, and observe the efforts Russia, France, and Germany are making to increase their fleets, and look to the work our navy might be called upon to do in connection with our possessions all over the world, which we are bound to protect, peacefully inclined as we may be, I feel that as guardians of our own honour and safety, we cannot rely upon one line of defence only. We must therefore have our army in the very best condition possible for its size, and capable of easy expansion.

The present mal-administration of our army is felt as keenly by most military men as it is by civilians; indeed, they are most generous and frank in giving civilians who choose to interest themselves in the subject all the assistance in their power. I have to thank, and have great pleasure in taking this opportunity of thanking, military men of all ranks for their great courtesy and kindness in giving me most freely information and assistance at all times.

In a country like this, where nothing but voluntary service is needed or would be endured, nothing but good can come from co-operation

between military men and civilians, especially large employers of labour.

No jealousy should exist, for co-operation cannot but be beneficial to both.

Much as civilians may now watch our War Department and wish to see it reformed, I am sure it is as much the desire and interest of military men to obtain sound reform in that Department, for they feel the discredit which now rests upon our Army Administration, and the danger of allowing the evils complained of to continue.

Bad as the condition of our army now is, it would not be so alarming if it were not for exaggerated statements put forth recently, and apparently with authority, of such a character as indicate that the War Department is still blind to the real position in which our army is.

This is no party question; it rises high above party feeling, and in a spirit above party feeling I earnestly hope that it may be treated, and that soon the condition of the British Army may be made worthy of its ancient renown.

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THE

BRITISH ARMY IN 1875.

CHAPTER I.

Disappointing results of the Army Reorganisation scheme of 1871-72—The condition of the Army of 1875 worse than that of 1870—Important that the public should take an interest in this Question—Accumulating evidence, showing that our Military system is unsound—Object of the present Pamphlet—Neither more Money nor more Men wanted—A more practical system of Organisation and Administration necessary—Power and capacity of the Nation generally in this respect—Difficulty in inducing the House of Commons to take an interest in the Question—The Public misled by meaningless phrases on Military Administration.

If, after all the grand promises made and great expenditure incurred in 1871-2 in what was fondly called 'the reorganisation of the British Army,' the whole scheme should prove to be a sham and a delusion, the feeling of the nation would surely be one of bitter disappointment.

Now, when the country might reasonably have expected to see the blemishes of the old system gently

passing away, and to experience some of the promised advantages of the new system, what do they find to be the result? Why this, that the Army of 1875 is worse in nearly every respect than was the Army of 1870. Nay, more: they also see that the scheme of reorganisation having been founded upon utterly unsound principles, we have (as I earnestly declared at the time we should) wasted three or four precious years and incurred an expenditure of thirteen millions of pounds sterling—eight and a half of it very wisely in the abolition of purchase, but four and a half of it very foolishly—3,500,000*l.* for Brigade Depôts, with an annual charge of 100,000*l.* to 120,000*l.*, more than equal to another 1,000,000*l.* of capital.

And who is now accountable to the nation? Not one of the authors of the scheme is now in the House of Commons, nor, indeed, can the present House of Commons be called to account. It was the work of a Parliament now dissolved.

Surely it is time that the public was prepared to take an active interest in this subject. It is in every respect one of the most momentous that could engage their attention, and it calls loudly for the immediate and thoughtful consideration of every class of the community. But some say that, before the attention of the public can be thoroughly arrested and fixed intelligently upon the subject of Army Reform, we must as a nation suffer some great disaster. I say, Heaven forbid! Have we not already, indeed, suffered

something like a serious disaster? We have wasted four years' time, incurred a useless expenditure equal in amount to the combined charge for the Ashantee War and the Alabama Claims, and sustained besides a loss of prestige in the eyes of all Europe.

Let our authorities openly and honestly avow that the Reorganisation Scheme has utterly failed, and not seek to hide the wretched condition in which our armies, both Home and Indian, are, and then let Parliament, without too much strife of words, deal in a common-sense and business-like manner with the grave and serious difficulties which surround this question. Until this be done, everything will remain in confusion and uncertainty.

Day by day evidence accumulates which shows that the principles upon which our military system rest are utterly unsound. But for the political changes which took place in the early part of last year, the subject no doubt would have engaged the attention of the House of Commons during the last session. As the present Government succeeded to office very suddenly, it was perhaps too much to hope or to expect that they would be prepared with any definite opinions or plans. The nation has now, however, a right to look to those charged with the responsibility of administering our military affairs, for a clear statement of the measures they propose to adopt, for rescuing our Army from the slough of despond which threatens to engulf it.

The spasmodic attempts which have hitherto been made to reorganise our military forces have failed, I believe, mainly because undertaken too hastily, and while those responsible for them were in a large degree ignorant of our actual condition and requirements. They have suffered also from the lack of knowledge and interest manifested on the subject on the part of that section of the public in this country which usually rough hews all great measures of progress and improvement—I mean the manufacturing, commercial, and business classes of the country. A variety of causes have operated to induce these classes to leave military questions alone, and the result has been that one of the most important departments of the State has been left under the almost uncontrolled guidance of officialism.

As the whole question must soon be fully discussed in Parliament, it has been suggested to me that if the public were supplied with a plain and succinct statement of facts with respect, in the first place, to the present condition of our military forces, and second, with regard to the reforms, improvements, and economies which might readily be effected, they would be placed in a better position to think for themselves, and take a real interest in the subject.

Hence the following pages.

I have had evidence placed before me, amply sufficient to show that, while we ourselves shut our eyes to the influences which so paralyse our military

administration and altogether refuse to understand our real position, our Continental neighbours are a great deal more observant. They thoroughly understand the condition of our Army, about which they have from time to time complete reports, especially since the very candid confession made by Mr. Gathorne Hardy last March, when for the first time he spoke officially of the Army, and said—

'Our Army is not one that threatens any human being, either on the Continent or anywhere else, and if we were involved in a war in which it became necessary to send our Army abroad—and I hope no such accident will occur—it must then be regarded merely as the nucleus of the Army which it would be necessary to raise if it had to compete with those on the Continent.'[1]

I have no sympathy whatever, let it be clearly understood, with a policy which would involve us in the foolish and extravagant rivalry in which the great military Powers of Europe are at present engaged. We can never hope—and, I trust, do not desire—to compete with them in numbers. Nor is there any necessity that we should. What the British people require, and what they really desire to have, is an army the

[1] That our Continental neighbours are observant cannot be doubted. When in Berlin, a few years ago, a friend with whom I was in conversation about the Prussian Army, pointed over to the War Office of Berlin, and said, 'There they know as much about every road and lane, river and stream of your Southern Counties as you know yourselves.'

very best in Europe for its size—sufficiently strong to guarantee our own safety at home, and maintain the security of our vast empire scattered throughout the world. To obtain this, WE NEITHER REQUIRE MORE MEN THAN WE RAISE, NOR MORE MONEY THAN WE SPEND UPON OUR ARMY. What we do want is a better class of men, and a more sound and practical system of organisation.

We have the most intelligent and industrious population in Europe to draw our recruits from; and I, for one, have the most unbounded faith in their British pluck and courage; besides, we have the finest plant in the world for producing warlike weapons and stores of every kind, and really organisation and admistration of our military forces is essentially akin to the organisation and administration of the vast manufacturing establishments of the nation.

No nation can boast of possessing anything like the same amount of capacity in this direction as we do. In manufactures, in commerce, and in all industrial enterprises, our competition is everywhere dreaded. At home or abroad we carry all before us. In a word, organisation may be said to be the very genius of the nation, and the vast manufacturing establishments of this country amply testify that our successes are mainly due to that sound system by which the maximum result is attained at the minimum expenditure of cost in production.

Why, then, should the administration of our mili-

tary affairs show such a lack of this talent, and why should the British Army occupy its present humiliating position?

It is a melancholy fact, to which my attention has been drawn, that so little interest is taken in military questions, and so indifferently are they understood in the House of Commons, that when a debate and division took place upon the Reorganisation Scheme of the late Government, a considerable number of members declined to vote, or, what was still worse, a large number blindly followed the Minister of the day into the division lobby.

The public are also at all times liable to be misled by officials and others making statements from time to time that are expressed in popular, old-fashioned phrases, such as these—

'The British Army is now composed of the same material as that which constituted the Army of Wellington,' or that 'the British Army will ever be found to do its duty in the future as it has done in the past.' These are simply meaningless absurdities. Nor can the complaints which are now made of the condition of our forces be satisfactorily met by the hackneyed retort 'that at all times the Service has been declared by some to be going to the dogs.' An enlightened public opinion would put the proper value on such phrases.

CHAPTER II.

Extent and effect of the Revolution in Modern Warfare inaugurated in 1866—Origin of the Prussian Military system—Its important results—Conditions necessary to make the Reorganisation of the Military Forces of this Country a success.

BEFORE the present position of our Army can be fairly understood it is essential that two things be thoroughly apprehended. First: That a complete revolution of the military systems of European nations was brought about by the Austro-Prussian war of 1866—a revolution as thorough and as comprehensive as that effected in manufacturing textile fabrics by the introduction of the power-loom, or in travelling by the substitution of fifty-mile-an-hour locomotives for stage-coaches.

The second point that requires to be understood is, what was the exact condition of our military forces in 1870, and the effect of the changes made in 1870, '71, and '72.

I will now consider briefly the extent and effect of the revolution which has taken place in the military systems of European nations since 1866. In that year everyone was astonished at the rapidity with which

Prussia called together her great army, and poured it upon Austrian territory. Although Prussia had then been at peace virtually for half a century, the organisation of her military forces was perfect, with the exception of the artillery, and this weakness was at once so completely remedied that by 1870 it was at least made clear that it was superior to the artillery of France, which had up till then been regarded as the first in Europe. After the Battle of Sadowa, in 1866, many of the European Powers made changes more or less important in their military systems. But the events of the war of 1870, which are still fresh in our minds, staggered all Europe. They caused nearly every nation to enquire carefully into its position, and to consider the cause of the extraordinary supremacy manifested by the German army. It became quite clear that the source of this supremacy was to be traced back to the Napoleonic epoch. In 1807 Napoleon forced the Prussian Government to limit their standing army to forty-two thousand men.

But this restriction, which was intended to cripple and curb the military power of Prussia, was ingeniously evaded by the adoption of the short service system. Forbidden to maintain a large standing army, the Prussian people were coerced, in a manner, into the adoption of what has proved to be the most efficient, the most moral, and the most economical military system which has yet been devised. No sooner were her recruits trained to be efficient soldiers, than they

were allowed to go home on furlough during peace. The home ties and associations formed by a young man were therefore never broken. The result, as we have seen, has been that while maintaining a comparatively small standing army, Prussia has been enabled to train and organise a military force which proved more than a match for the powerful military nation which had imposed upon her this arbitrary condition. The more carefully the military system of Prussia is examined, the more clearly will it appear that she has acted in this matter of military organisation on plain practical common-sense principles, and it will be found that conscription has really very little to do with the economy resulting therefrom.

Two most important results Prussia thus achieved —economy in peace, and great strength and efficiency in war.

Before pointing out the leading practical principles of the Prussian system, I desire to remark that the experience of that nation establishes this fact, that while the practice of passing young men of twenty years of age through the army in two or three years gives her at all times a reliable force, it also sends them back to civil life greatly improved physically and not less moral. Military service, as it is now enforced in Prussia, does not prevent a young man of three-and-twenty from marrying, and the same may now almost be said of the military service of France. If called out in time of war, a man is not likely to

fight any the worse because he has led a moral life and has a wife and children to defend. This moral strength gave no small advantage to the Germans when fighting in 1870 against the old celibate army of France.

I will now state what appear to me the chief conditions which recent experience has proved to be necessary, and which, modified according to its own special circumstances and requirements, must guide every European nation which has either respect for morality or any desire or regard for efficiency and economy.

First.—That as wars are now quickly declared, and almost as quickly concluded, half-trained troops are a mere deception—an encumbrance to an army in the field rather than an aid. War between Prussia and France was declared at 9 A.M. on July 13, 1870. In 51 days Sedan fell—viz., on September 2 following.

Second.—That as three years is acknowledged to be the outside term required to make an efficient soldier in any arm of the Service, it is in the interests of the men, and of the nation, that after such a period of service (except in the case of service in India or the Colonies) men should retire from the ranks upon furlough. This is a most essential point under a voluntary system of service like our own, in which one man with the colours costs as much as four or five men upon furlough.

Third.—That as an army to be worthy of the

name must be composed of a fair proportion of each arm of the Service,[1] it is as essential under a voluntary system of enlistment, as under compulsory service, that the periods of enlistment should be uniform.

Fourth.—That as a short service and furlough system demand at once from a recruit the heaviest work (the first six or nine months' drill being always the heaviest and most irksome), the age of recruits should not be less than twenty years.

Fifth.—That a system of Army Corps, or in other words a series of small armies, each perfect in itself, is the most simple and economical organisation for any military force, and more particularly for the army of a nation like this which possesses great dependencies and numerous colonies.

Sixth.—That well-defined responsibility from the Commander-in-Chief down to the subaltern is essential.

Seventh.—That as a General cannot be made without drill any more than soldiers can be made without training, it is necessary, by means of autumn manœuvres between distinct army corps, that commanding officers should have an opportunity of testing their own skill, so that the authorities and the nation may know upon whom, in case of war, they can best rely.

These conditions are clear and simple, and are being acted upon, more or less, at the present moment

[1] See Chart of Composition of an Army Corps, fronting title-page.

by Russia, Holland, Denmark, Austria, Italy, and France. Visiting France the other day, I was astonished to see the complete change which has already taken place in the stamp of the men now in the ranks. The old celibate military system of France is at an end. The recruits are taken young, and as soon as they are efficiently trained are allowed to go back to their ordinary occupations, after a service, nominally of five, but, practically, of three years. By the year 1880 all the European Powers I have named will have armies vastly stronger than those which they possessed in 1870. Our own, on the contrary, unless immediate and thorough reforms are instituted, promises to be very much weaker.

NOTE.—It may interest many here to remark that the Prussian military system of to-day is apparently modelled upon that of the Romans. Citizens between the same ages—17 to 42—were liable to be called up for military service, and the army was divided into legions, or army corps. In each legion there were cavalry and three classes of infantry—the Hastati, consisting of young men in the prime of life and forming the first line of battle; the Principes, or men in the vigour of life, who occupied the second line; and the Triarii, old soldiers of approved valour, who formed the third line.

CHAPTER III.

The warning of 1866 neglected—Feebleness of our Military Force in 1870—Its enormous cost—Panic Legislation of 1870—Lord Cardwell's scheme of Reorganisation—Its hermaphrodite character—Competition for Recruits between Line and Militia—Neglect of the Reserve Force—The scheme of Localisation adopted—Its inapplicability to this Country—Number of Recruits annually required under Lord Cardwell's scheme.

I NOW propose to consider the second point—namely, what was the position of our military forces in 1870, and what did we then do?

Although we had, like all the rest of Europe, a warning in 1866, the remedial measures we then adopted amounted to very little. We formed two small reserve forces, but practically they came to nothing. In 1870, therefore, we had perhaps greater reason than any other nation in Europe to feel that our position was exceedingly feeble and unsatisfactory. So much was this the case, that it is admitted that we could not then have sent 40,000 men out the country capable of competing with almost any European army. The internal condition of our military forces was at the same time most discreditable, and the country was startled to

find, that it paid an enormous sum of money for very trifling results. We were spending from fourteen to fifteen millions annually, and yet we were without anything like a reliable force to show for it. We had a crowd of men, but really no Army. The nation at the same time saw Prussia spending annually ten to eleven millions sterling, but with an organisation which enabled her to call into the field in a fortnight an army of 940,000 highly-trained men! Still more, it became also evident that through long neglect of our Indian forces we really had two armies to reform, both in respect to efficiency and economy, for our expenditure upon our combined military forces not only was, but is a scandal, and as regards India it is positively a grave danger.

In 1870 the united cost of our Home and Indian Armies was about 34,000,000*l.* sterling, while the cost of the combined hosts of France, Germany, and Austria was but 32,450,000*l.* sterling. The number of men (mostly half-trained) which we could muster did not greatly exceed one-fourth of the number maintained by these great Powers.

After such startling disclosures it becomes an interesting question, what did we do?

Immediately war was declared between Germany and France in 1870, our War Department was panic-struck as usual, and 20,000 more men were voted (of course raw recruits) and something like two millions of money.

In the years 1871–72 Lord Cardwell introduced his several measures for reforming the Army, some of them admirably conceived, and all, it is possible, he believed in his own mind, calculated to improve our military system. The measures which appeared to be so were Abolition of the Purchase system, the endeavour to get rid of the dual government of the Army by removing the staff at the Horse Guards to the War Office, and the transfer from Lord Lieutenants of Counties to the Minister of War of all appointments of officers to the Militia.

These were admirable reforms, necessary to clear the ground for a complete scheme of reorganisation, and they were carried through Parliament with a firm and statesmanlike hand, and with a courtesy that caused most men to give to Lord Cardwell's policy a favourable construction and consideration. But just when those who were watching all this with interest and concern expected to see a suitable scheme of reorganisation come from the same hand, that hand became suddenly paralysed; and temporising and feebleness marked every step of the future. We neither adopted short service with sound arrangements for a reserve, nor did we altogether retain the old system of long service with a retiring pension. Complex as was our practice of recruiting, we had fastened upon us a scheme which was truly of the most hermaphrodite character, and which has resulted in something but little removed from absolute chaos. My readers

may judge for themselves of the truth of this by turning to the Appendix, where they will find extracts from the existing recruiting regulations.[1]

Under the new system the prospect of obtaining a Reserve force, composed of a proper proportion of the different arms of the Service, is simply hopeless, seeing that the terms of enlistment range in the most uncertain manner from three to twenty-one years. It is perfectly obvious that an efficient Reserve can alone be secured by having one uniform period of enlistment for all arms.

But again, although all Europe was aroused in 1870 to the plain fact that half-trained troops are really useless in war, and although we saw the Franc-Tireurs and Garde Mobile of the French swept away like children before the trained soldiers of Germany; and although we ourselves shuddered to think what might happen, under similar circumstances, to our ancient 'Constitutional' force—that great county toy, the Militia—what did Lord Cardwell actually propose? Why, to conciliate county interests, he proposed and carried that this force should be enlarged, and its homœopathic dose of drill in the case of raw recruits increased from one month to three! It must be clear to any rational mind with information on the subject, that recruiting for the Militia directly prevents many of the men we want from entering the Army. The Inspector-General of Recruiting makes this remark

[1] Appendix, page 141.

in his report, on January 10, 1871:—'Recruiting for the regular Army is very injuriously affected by enlistments for the Militia.' Yet at this very time, and when additional recruits were wanted for the Army, Lord Cardwell, with great impartiality, resolved to increase the Militia also; and the recruiting sergeants of the two forces were sent out as usual to fight for the same men. The irony of the situation is complete when we bear in mind that while the recruit for the Army was supposed at the time to be more imperatively required, the recruiting sergeant of the Militia could give a bounty of ten shillings, while his competitor for the Line could give nothing. What is the result? That not only does the Militia get more recruits, as shown in returns which I have prepared,[1] but it also appears that in this force there are 46,400 men between 19 and 25, the very ages most valuable for the Army, whilst, out of the 90,000 now in the ranks of the Line, there are but 39,900 of these ages.

At this time the country was so convinced of the weakness of our position, that had a Minister of War clearly pointed out the shortcomings of our Militia force, and firmly insisted that in future it should be composed only of trained men who had passed through the army, he would certainly have carried all before him. Not only would he have had all the support of the country, but the change would have been cordially acquiesced in by many country gentlemen, who must

[1] Appendices, pages 150 and 152.

be satisfied that the Militia, as at present constituted, is nothing more than a toy, and a very expensive one too, both directly and indirectly.

The absence of anything like clear and satisfactory arrangements for the formation of an efficient reserve force was so conspicuous in Lord Cardwell's scheme of army reorganisation, that I at once came to the conclusion that there was no hope of obtaining such a force. Nothing was really done subsequently in this direction. The short service system, under which a reserve of trained men can alone be obtained, was never carried out in its integrity, and the pay of the Reserve remains at the miserable pittance of fourpence a day, an amount which never could be meant to attract good men to our service.

I think it due to myself to republish a criticism which I offered on Lord Cardwell's scheme, in the form of a note, appended to my speech in the House of Commons on this subject. It will be found in the Appendix.[1]

I come now to the scheme of localisation suggested by Lord Cardwell, and by which the country was mapped out into some seventy divisions, in each of which was to be placed a small barrack with a lieutenant-colonel and staff. The main purpose of this was to link the Line, the Militia, and other reserve forces together, and to obtain recruits. Three millions and a half of money was asked, and voted for the

[1] See Appendix, page 143.

scheme; and each of the depôt centres, it may be calculated, will cost from 1,500*l.* to 2,000*l.* a year, additional.

All this was a gross error. The War Department here followed the Prussian model, in the only one point not applicable to this country. The points that were applicable they neglected. I will make this plain:—

In Prussia the ground-work of their system is, to obtain men by conscription; therefore they divide the country into minute divisions, as shown in the military map now before me, so that each man may be, and is absolutely, watched from his cradle to his grave. By this means the authorities know when each man attains the age of 20, the period at which he should enter the army, and also that when on furlough, or in the Landwehr, their eyes may be upon him. But in a country like this, under a voluntary system, when by considerations of self-interest alone can we get or keep men, it was not more traps for catching recruits that we wanted, but better bait in the traps which we had.

Then when in the reserve, it is not narrow bounds and minute localisation that are needed—quite the reverse: it is localisation with a large area, within which men, when on furlough, may have full scope to move about and obtain employment. And so far only is localisation with us good,—it should fix an area, with wide boundaries, within which each Army Corps should be permanently located; and such a plan would not

have entailed any cost upon the country, for I may here mention that, by carrying out thoroughly and with decision the system of short service and a well-paid Reserve, our numbers in barracks would have greatly diminished, and would not only have relieved us of the necessity of building new barracks, but would have left us with more accommodation than we really require. We have at present barrack accommodation in the United Kingdom for 130,000 men and 6,000 officers.

The foregoing is, I think, a fair statement of the measures proposed and adopted in the years 1870-71-72, but it would be imperfectly understood without the official estimate of the number of men which would be required annually to carry their scheme out. Fortunately these numbers were given with great clearness and exactitude, and it is an all-important point. A Commission which sat before the scheme came into operation calculated that at least 22,000 recruits were required annually. In 1870 Lord Cardwell, when introducing the Enlistment Act of that year, gave 23,000 as the requisite number. In March, 1871, Captain Vivian stated in the House of Commons that the reorganisation plan of the Government, by an actuarial calculation, would require on an average 32,449 men annually, and upon this basis the scheme was passed. From these statements the public can at any time judge for themselves, whether recruiting in point of numbers progresses satisfactorily.

The result of Lord Cardwell's scheme, we were assured, would be that in the fourth year of its operation we should have a Reserve force of 13,674 men, which in seven years would have attained to 61,268, and in eight years to 81,811.

CHAPTER IV.

The results of Lord Cardwell's Reorganisation scheme—Steady deterioration in the quality of Recruits—Falling off in the number of Men raised — Increase in the number of Men discharged as bad characters—Growth of discontent and dissatisfaction in the Ranks—Statistics of Desertions—Conflict of Opinion between Official and Independent Authority as to the condition of our Army.

LET us now look at the actual results attained. By the light of a few facts, I hope to show what a fool's Paradise we have been living in during the past four years.

First as to quality. The number of rejections per 1,000 that are made of recruits offering themselves for enlistment is not only a very fair test of quality, but it also shows the great cost of winnowing the weak from the strong, a process which, under a sound system of recruiting, might be almost entirely avoided. The number rejected per 1,000 in 1872 was 442. The average from 1860 to 1867 was 385, and in the ten years from 1841 to 1851 it was 335, and in the ten years from 1832 to 1841 it was only 298. And that this increased proportion of rejections was not caused by over-fastidiousness as to the quality of those whose services were retained, will be apparent from

testimony worthy of consideration. First.—Captain Walter, Commanding Officer of the Corps of Commissionaires, who has done much for the old soldier, says in his report, dated June 24, 1874:—'As regards the number of dismissals (50 against 35 in the preceding year), the addition may be attributed partly to a more impartial maintenance of the Regulations, *but principally to the deplorable deterioration in the quality of the rank and file which is well known to have taken place in the last few years.*' Second.—Dr. Adams, Surgeon-Major of the London Recruiting District, when lecturing, on February 2 last year, at the United Service Institution, said:—'I must candidly assert that the physique of our Infantry is not at present up to the standard of our race, and I cannot conceal from myself a feeling that, unless remedial measures be adopted at once, it will fall lower and lower.' This conclusion, Dr. Adams further stated, 'had been arrived at mainly from personal inspection of about 25,000 recruits, over 17,000 of whom have passed into the Army.' Third. —Dr. Cameron, Deputy-Inspector-General of Hospitals, on the same occasion, said:—'We are enlisting the very scum of society.'

In respect to the quality of our recruits, what testimony could be stronger? For myself, I can so far confirm it by what I have recently seen at inspections of recruits, that I consider these statements not only fully borne out, but I feel I could add something more to them. This, however, I must reserve for

another occasion. We talk of the recklessness of allowing unseaworthy ships to leave our ports; can it be regarded as greater than would be the foolhardiness of sending these mere striplings to meet any trained force that might invade our shores? Surely it will not be asserted that recruiting is satisfactory as to quality.

Then in respect to numbers, the state of the case is still worse. I have already shown that 32,449 was the average number of recruits necessary to be obtained annually, in the opinion of our military authorities, as soon as we had fairly entered upon Lord Cardwell's scheme of reorganisation. Now what are the facts since the passing of the Enlistment Act of 1870 in respect to recruiting. The numbers raised in

1870	were	24,594
1871	„	23,568
1872	„	17,791
1873	„	17,194
1874	„	20,640

In truth, so difficult had it become to obtain men of the right stamp after this brief experience of the new system, that on November 30, 1873, our Army was short of its complement by 5,400 men, our Reserve was short by 2,500, and our Militia by 20,000. These figures represent a total deficiency of 28,000 from the number voted in February of the same year, and this notwithstanding the fact that 10,000 fewer were then voted for the Militia than the previous year. I may

here remark that, if trade should prove indifferent and dull, it is not unlikely that recruiting may improve, for men out of employment will make use of the Army for a time, regarding it as a convenient mode of obtaining out-door relief. But this would really be no proof of a sound improvement in recruiting, and should have no effect upon the consideration of this grave question. And it cannot be asserted, certainly, that our recruiting for the Army, so far as quantity is concerned, is satisfactory.

Nor has the character of the Army improved under the reorganisation scheme. The number of men discharged as bad characters in

1870	was . . .	1,616
1871	„ . . .	1,032
1872	„ . . .	1,683
1873	„ . . .	2,025

while the average number of men in prison in

1870	was . . .	1,288
1871	„ . . .	1,842
1872	„ . . .	1,914
1873	„ . . .	1,554

Again, one of the most important improvements looked for was a reduction in the average mortality and sickness in our Army. Under our present antiquated system of keeping thousands of men over a long term of years in a state of enforced celibacy we have the most mischievous results. In 1872, out of an average

strength of 92,218 men, the average number constantly in hospital was 3,628.

As to the influence of age on the mortality of troops in the United Kingdom I beg to refer my readers to the Appendix,[1] by which it is clear that continuing the long service system as we do, we are keeping men in an enforced state of celibacy, and maintaining a direct cause of much immorality and a considerable expenditure. We have over 60,000 men (out of 180,000) in our Army who are between 30 and 40 years of age—men who might be married and domesticated citizens. The young married soldiers of Prussia, we should recollect, proved more than a match for the celibate army of France.

By the reorganisation scheme we were told the Army would be made more attractive. Dissatisfaction was to diminish, if not to cease. In practice, precisely the reverse has proved to be the case. Let

[1] See Appendix, page 147.

NOTE.—1872 is the last year for which we have the Army Medical Report. By its light in respect to some points of grave interest, the House of Commons is about to consider the Army Estimates for 1875. What business men will think of this I have no difficulty in judging, more especially when I state that I can have made up a clear account of the desertions for 1874 up to December 31. Parliament should insist upon all information about the Home Army for the past year preceding or accompanying the Estimates. Also the actual strength of our Indian and Colonial forces, by the last report in possession of the War Department.

the facts speak for themselves. There went out of the Army by purchase in

1870	1,493 men.
1871	2,109 „
1872	2,839 „
1873	2,981 „
1874	2,653 „

But more economical means are adopted by simply deserting, and it is largely approved of, as will be found in the statistics of desertion. In my view the real measure of dissatisfaction in the ranks is the number of men periodically advertised for as deserters; not the net number merely who make good their escape. The men who are captured and retained in the Service by force, so to speak, can hardly add to its contentment and satisfaction. The following is a statement of the number of deserters advertised for annually since the reorganisation scheme came into operation:—

1870	4,480
1871	6,967
1872	7,653
1873	7,094
1874	6,904

It is a notable fact also that the desertions from the Artillery, an arm of the Service which it is most important should be maintained in the highest state of efficiency both at home and in India, are proportionately more numerous than from any other branch of the Army. I have prepared the following figures

for the purpose of showing how weak our present system is.

I will take the number of recruits who joined the various arms of the Service in 1873, and the number advertised for as deserters from the same during that year.

	Recruits.	Deserters.
Cavalry . .	2,078	944
Artillery . .	3,478	1,868
Infantry . .	10,760	4,094
Engineers . .	443	131
Army Service Corps	194	57

And here is 1874—

Cavalry	986
Artillery	2,066
Infantry	3,641
Engineers	159
Army Service Corps . . .	52

Then as to the promised solid, reliable reserve of trained men—there is none, and there can be none under the present arrangement.

But then the Militia was to be strengthened and increased, and in 1872 we were asked to vote, and did vote, 135,200 non-commissioned officers and men. And on November 30, 1873, the whole number actually in existence was 105,000, or 28,000 less than promised. Of course, not that I think it any loss, but what impotence of purpose! Either the authorities did really mean what they said in 1872, or they did not. I leave the reader to form his own opinion.

The statistics relating to recruiting for the Militia

are certainly most striking, especially when we bear in mind that all this time the Line was starving for men.

The recruits who joined the Militia numbered in

1870	18,700
1871	32,876
1872	30,000
1873	25,800
1874	29,500

There is a looseness of contract in regard to service in the Militia which leads to great freedom of action in respect to desertions in this force, and which sets all chance of maintaining good discipline at defiance. The evil grows faster in the Militia than in the Army, moreover, as is proved by the following figures. The number of desertions from the Militia advertised for in

1870 was . . .	3,720
1871 „ . . .	6,949
1872 „ . . .	7,663
1873 „ . . .	10,400
1874 „ . . .	10,540

In respect to the Militia, there is, fortunately, a sounder view obtaining among the intelligent and thoughtful officers of the force. They see that the present system is absolutely absurd, and is doomed, and they now speak out more freely. During the past two months I have had many communications of this kind. I observe that Col. Aikman, of R. E. Middlesex

Militia, stated his experience frankly at the United Service Institution last February. He said:—

'We recruit for the Line through the Militia. This I believe to be wrong. It is because the Line and the Militia are recruiting in the same field that a sufficient number of men of proper physique are not procurable, and desertions and fraud are practised with impunity. When men of unsettled habits make up their mind to join the Army they first enlist in the Militia, and receive their bounty, clothes, &c., and then desert. They sell the Government property, valued at 5*l.*, for what it will fetch, and then enlist in the Line. Having succeeded so well, they continue their migratory habits in the regular service. I had 48 walk off in one morning; a few were caught, and sentenced by the civil powers to a fine of 2*l.* 10*s.*, or three months' imprisonment. By this arrangement the delinquents had a balance in their favour.'[1]

A Colonel of Militia in another part of the country, who had been formerly in the Army, told me lately he would far rather hold a lower rank in a really efficient Reserve force than have his present rank in the Militia. I have now shown, by the light of incontestable facts, the steady deterioration of the Army since 1870.

Our military administration has, beyond doubt, been gradually degenerating for the last thirty years;

[1] If the 10,000 deserters from the Militia all carry away 5*l.* worth of property each, this is no small loss in itself.

and although it was found to be disorganised enough in 1854, yet the Crimean War showed to the world and to ourselves that we had a splendid set of men in our ranks compared with what we have now. It is true we by the force of money scrambled through our difficulties. But it is because that since that time we have not recognised the change going on around us in Europe, and have neglected to regard the great revolution in the social forces around us—the vast advance in the position of the agricultural labourer and the artizan of England—we find our military system is a tangled labyrinth, and the chief aim of the officials seems to be simply to make it look pleasant. The truth is that officials at the War Department have been so long accustomed to the evils that surround them, that they have become themselves almost unconscious of the cause and extent of the disorganisation which exists.

I do not blame the men altogether, but I do blame the system. We impose upon a War Minister duties which, both physically and mentally, are very great, *and until we simplify our system by decentralisation,* I fear it will be difficult for any man entering fresh upon his office at once fully to grasp the question. A Minister must trust greatly to whatever he is told or to what is put into his hands; or how, for instance, can we reconcile the language used by the Secretary of State for War in the House of Commons on February 24, 1873, with the statement made only twenty-

two days before by Dr. Adams, Surgeon-Major of the London Recruiting District. Dr. Adams tells us plainly enough that the quality of our recruits is not good, and must, unless something be done, sink lower and lower, and this after an examination of 25,000 of them. The Secretary of State for War, three weeks after, in asking the House of Commons to vote the estimates, said, speaking of recruiting:—

'You will also find that the commanding officers in almost all cases approved the recruits sent to them. The principal medical officers, after the usual monthly examinations, generally expressed the same opinion, and reported favourably, and, if these recruits are to be tested by the appearance they presented in the Military Manœuvres of last autumn, a person must be fastidious indeed who was not satisfied with every branch of the British Army on that occasion.'

Could language be stronger or clearer than this of Lord Cardwell's? Can language be more convincing than that of Dr. Adams and Dr. Cameron? Both cannot be right.

But further, as regards numbers, the statement is equally perplexing. The Secretary of State for War said on the same occasion:—'In the present month of February we did not press forward recruiting because our establishment was 4,235 in excess of the number we now ask you to provide for in the estimates, and there is, you see, no difficulty at present in keeping up our strength.'

If the establishment to the extent of 4,235 was in excess, then the clear duty of the Secretary of State was at once to have brought up the Reserve to its full number, yet on November 30, 1873, the Reserve was found to be 2,500 short, and the Army 5,400! To say the least, some one's judgment in February was not very accurate.

CHAPTER V.

Our Army likely to be worse in future—Decrease in the classes of population from which Recruits have been obtained—Deterioration in the character of the non-commissioned officers—Their importance in maintaining efficiency.

BUT bad as the condition of our Army may now be, that it will become still worse is, I believe, inevitable, and for the following reasons:—

The two best recruiting grounds for the Army have hitherto been Ireland and the south-western and other agricultural counties of England. In neither of these districts have we now the same amount of raw material to work upon. The number of men available as recruits has sensibly diminished, and wages have largely increased. In Ireland these influences have already produced a remarkable change. While in 1860, 321 out of every 1,000 recruits raised were obtained in Ireland, in 1872 the proportion was only 72 per 1,000. The recent agitation in the agricultural districts of England will unquestionably increase the difficulties of the recruiting sergeant, because the results have been a considerable amount of emigration and migration and a rise in the rate of

wages. It is a fact worth noticing that, whilst in 1861 the number of indoor and outdoor labourers employed in agriculture in England and Wales was 1,365,000, in 1871 that number had diminished to 1,149,000, or something like 16 per cent.

We have, moreover, at the present moment, 38,000 men in the Army who have seen from fifteen to twenty-one years' service, and who, therefore, must retire in a few years. These vacancies, added to those created by the shorter term of enlistment, will create a gap which certainly cannot be filled up at the present rate at which recruiting for the Line progresses.

By a recent decision of the House of Commons no recruits can be sent to India under twenty years of age, and as we do not enlist separately for India (although if we did she would draw plenty of recruits for herself) we really send the pick of our men there.

But what, perhaps, is the most important point of all, and a matter of the greatest gravity, having regard to the future efficiency of our Army, is the deterioration which is in progress in the quality of our non-commissioned officers. The sergeants used to be regarded as the backbone of the British Army, but, from the class of recruits now joining, it is daily becoming more and more difficult to obtain suitable and efficient non-commissioned officers. The same remark applies with equal force to the Militia, which relies upon the Line for a supply of men for the permanent staff.

CHAPTER VI.

Class of Men required as Recruits—Their number, and how to be obtained—Sorry results of our present Military system—Contrast between the Prussian and British Military Administration—Number of Recruits required under Short Service System fewer than now raised—Great gain in respect to efficiency.

BEFORE proceeding to explain the class of men we require and should have as recruits in the future, and how they are to be obtained, it is important and very necessary to determine upon the number we need. It is absurd indeed to waste time, session after session, discussing the question whether we are to vote 10,000 men more or less for our Army. Our foreign policy, I take it, has now been definitely pronounced, and it will be in the future, as it has now for some time been in the past, that of non-intervention.

The number of men we have had in the Army in each of the past ten years, as well as the average number for the past four years, will be found in the Appendix,[1] and I beg to refer my readers to it. A still more reliable and trustworthy guide in respect to

[1] Appendix, p. 123.

numbers, however, is the actual strength of our forces at home on November 30, 1873, and of the forces in India and the Colonies on September 1 of the same year.[1]

And now, as to our Home Army, which, as will be observed, is stated to be 90,469 men. Let me analyse these figures. Owing to our present vicious military system we have something approaching 5,000 men daily in prison or in hospital. We have, moreover, a large number in the ranks who are mere boys. We cannot safely say, therefore, that in November, 1873, we had more than 80,000 out of the total 90,469 who could be regarded as really efficient and serviceable.

Now as to the Militia. When I bear in mind that at the last annual training only 74,200 answered the roll-call, and consider that the desertions from this force are proportionately even more numerous than from the Army, and are increasing in a rapid ratio,[2] and when I know, as all the world knows, that the bulk of these Militiamen have really had almost no training, and have acquired less discipline, I think if I reckon them to be worth 37,500 trained and efficient troops, I put, I am sure, a high valuation upon them. We had also 7,500 Reserve men, who, if they could be got at, are undoubtedly trained men. Adding these several forces together, we find the total number would be equivalent to 125,000 trained troops. This is the

[1] Appendix, p. 122. [2] Appendix, p. 124.

sorry result of all our efforts and our most monstrous expenditure. I feel confident that every business man in the country will feel ashamed when I compare the common-sense and practical military administration of Prussia and its results with the fatuous and feeble management of our War Department.

In 1870, Prussia had in her army 940,000 highly trained, efficient, and well-disciplined men of from 20 to 32 years of age. The number of men recruited annually to maintain this force was only 100,000, while we, with a force equivalent but to 125,000 such troops, actually raise about 49,270 recruits annually![1] What a waste of time, of energy, and of money is represented by these latter figures!

Now as to the number which we require. What we really require, in my opinion, is 168,000 men for our Home and Colonial services—all to be enlisted for a period of seven years. Of this number, 22,000, required for our Colonial force, would serve their whole term of seven years with the colours, and receive a sum of money in hand at the end of that term in lieu of pension. Of the remaining 146,000 at home, 66,000 would be with the colours, and 80,000 on furlough. For India 60,000 men would be required, and upon the same terms as for the Colonies. The

[1] As our Volunteers serve upon an average about three years and a half, something like 45,000 fresh men join annually, so that about 90,000 men in the United Kingdom offer themselves voluntarily every year for military service—nearly as many as Prussia gets by conscription!

total number of men required to maintain the rank and file of these forces each year would therefore be—

For Indian Service . . .	9,300
For Colonial Service . . .	3,300
For Home Service . . .	20,000
Total . .	32,600

or something like 16,600 less than the number we raise now; a small number for our population.[1]

In this manner I calculate that our foreign services would be amply provided for, and an army of 146,000 men would be obtained for home service without trouble, and at much less cost. These men could also be of a much better stamp than those we have now to content ourselves with. The fourth year after the establishment of such a force, and every year thereafter, fifteen to twenty thousand trained men would pass into civil life. Each of these men would be equal to do soldier's duty for four or five years more, and they would ultimately constitute a powerful latent force which could be made available for the service of the country in a case of emergency.

The offer of a money bounty under such circumstances would no doubt be sufficient to enable us to procure as many as we could possibly require.

The knowledge that we possessed among our own population a powerful reserve of this kind would be a great source of strength in itself, and it could not fail

[1] See Appendix VI. p. 126.

to be regarded in the same light by European Powers who would know of it from the moment we resolutely adopted it.

The scheme I have thus briefly sketched is nothing but a modification of the modern military system which every nation now feels itself compelled to adopt if it desires to keep in the front rank among modern Powers. Backed by an efficient, well-trained force, like this I have described, we would be infinitely stronger for defence than with half-a-dozen such antiquated and effete military forces as our Militia.

Nor need such a plan of military reorganisation as this take much time in being fully developed, if adopted and carried out with energy and with prudence. No more official enquiries or ponderous blue-books are needed. It is a plain question, which an efficient administration should at once deal with. By legislation last session the Government have now full control over the whole of our forces, and they have more money than under a reorganised system they can possibly use.

It would be imprudent to propose any sudden or violent change in the Militia force which now exists; until the Reserve is made up it might be continued in its present form, but, as recruiting for it would cease, the Reserve men retiring from the Line would meantime pass into the Militia, and be drilled annually with that force. Were my suggestions adopted, the liberal terms offered would be certain to induce as many men

as we would desire at once to retire into the Reserve. Indeed, experience shows that there is no small number of men in the ranks who would gladly avail themselves of an opportunity of leaving the Army without any such strong encouragement.

CHAPTER VII.

Paramount necessity of a Reform in our Military administration—Difficulties of the task—Flexibility and simplicity of the Prussian system—Importance of decentralisation—The Army Corps—How constituted, and its advantages—Well defined authority and responsibility the mainsprings of success—Comparative cost of Administration of Prussian and British Armies—Economy that might be effected in the case of the latter.

In the foregoing pages I have mainly dwelt upon the causes which exist, and which prevent our obtaining the right class of men for military service. This part of the question I conceive there need not be much difficulty in dealing with. The more serious question which the country has to face is the reform of our existing system of military administration. And, in fact, had this system been sound, it is doubtful if the question of how to get and keep good men in our service would ever have arisen.

Whoever undertakes it will find this reform no easy task. Our War Department appears to me to be swathed and bandaged in red tape, and is surrounded with a hard crust of routine officialism, which must be broken before any good can be effected. It must be

broken, and I feel from the outside, for unless Parliament and the public think for themselves, and act with determination, sound reform is hopeless. Let us obtain and keep whatever number of good men we like, without a sound system of military administration and organisation we only deceive ourselves if we believe that we possess a reliable army. Since 1866 practical experience has most clearly shown that mere numbers will not suffice for success. It was by sound organisation and direction that both Austria and France were overcome by Prussia. Each of the defeated nations had abundance of men, but their administration and management were most defective.

The principles under which the French Army was guided before the war of 1870 were very much like those recognised by our War Department. Centralisation was the keynote of the system. The minutest details had to be decided upon and regulated by an overworked and distracted Minister of War, the satisfactory discharge of whose duties in time of peace was difficult, and in war impossible. Cumbrous and paralysing, they engendered confusion and weakness at the moment when it was most necessary to have everything in perfect order. The system of military administration in Prussia was the reverse of this. Its decentralisation was so complete that the Minister of War had most ample time for the discharge of his duties during peace, and in the event of war he had but to telegraph to the Commanding Officer of each

Army Corps one single word, 'Mobilise,' and the important part of his work was done. We all know how soon the Prussian forces were in the field when war was declared in 1866 and 1870.

Such a system of decentralisation by the division of the military forces into distinct army corps, each corps perfect and complete in itself, gives a Minister of War a distinct and confident assurance that they may be brought into the field fully equipped, perfect, and ready for action on the shortest notice possible; for they are complete in every arm, in transport, in control, and in every appliance of war.[1]

Moreover, as such army corps are exactly like each other, whatever number may be called out, the army is proportionately the same throughout. In this manner the Prussian Minister of War could at any moment call out a military force of whatever size he might determine upon from one army corps numbering 22,514 men without its reserves, to 56,702 with its reserves; so in gentle gradation as to number up to 940,000 men, all complete and perfect. When war was concluded, this force, whatever might be its size, was just as easily contracted.

In short, the Prussian system is so flexible, and so

[1] In our case the control is in the hands of civilians, of whom the combatant officer is not very tolerant, an intolerance which, on the other hand, is resented by the control officer, a condition of things exceedingly unsatisfactory, where all should be arranged so as to be harmonious, and each arm and department working in perfect accord and for the common good.

completely under control, that, like an umbrella, it can be expanded when required, at the will of him who holds the staff, and closed immediately the need has passed away. In our case, the umbrella is inflexible. It has no joints; no one hand holds the staff, and although it is small we cannot close it; it is never in the best of order when needed, and its maintenance is most expensive.

The question arises how is this flexibility in the Prussian service produced? The answer is simple. Through the Army Corps system. The General at the head of each Army Corps has supreme power over it in every respect—feeding, clothing, training, exercising, and maintaining it in readiness to take the field. He receives from the War Department only two things—money and cloth; and to all intents and purposes he is an independent chief, subject only to a very general control.

With this power, however, he has associated corresponding responsibility—he is answerable for everything; for the state of his corps in peace, for its readiness to take the field, for the state of its supplies, the condition of its field-waggons, &c., &c. Similarly, every one under him has a certain authority, within which he acts with corresponding responsibility.

Nearly every man in each Army Corps is known to another, and each arm of the Service is accustomed to work in harmony with the other. They are ready

to go into action in a few days' notice, with everything complete, down even to the drugs required in the field. As an illustration, when in Prussia some time ago, seeking to understand their system, I visited the several barracks of an Army Corps and its depôt, at which in time of peace are stored all the waggons required in the field. Nothing could be more business-like and systematic than the arrangements. The Major in charge produced his book, showing the waggons, &c., under his care. In all they numbered 285, and amongst them were large medical waggons—the Apothecaries' Halls of the field, if I may so term them—and smaller ones, which might be compared to dispensing shops. Both were fitted with every appliance and requirement ready for immediate use, except, of course, actual medicine, for each sort of which, however, there was a distinct receptacle marked with its name, and on an order being received to mobilise, it is the doctor's duty to see that everything is provided and in perfect order.

Each Army Corps, then, constitutes an army in itself, and its proper and efficient management is the business of the General at its head. The competition between Commanding Officers in respect to efficiency and economy exercises a most wholesome influence. Moreover, autumn manœuvres between the different Army Corps are regularly engaged in; they serve to test not only the capacity of the Generals in com-

mand, but also the efficiency of the forces, and the public have a clear notion of what they are paying for, and whether they have their money's worth.

Clear and well-defined authority and responsibility are the mainsprings of the Prussian system of administration. A more practical, earnest body of men than the Prussian officers I have not come in contact with. Every Captain is as anxious about the efficiency of his Company as the General is about that of his Army Corps. The eye of the superior Commanding Officer is over all, for his own credit and reputation are dependent upon the good work done by all under him.

The General does not care how often the Captain may have his men out, provided he shows good results. Here a Captain would be stared at if he proposed to have his men out on his own account, so that he might bring them well up in drill.

I do not for a moment desire it to be thought that our officers are not both able and willing to do all that is required of an officer either in Prussia or anywhere else. On the contrary, in many cases I know that they only wish they had such opportunities and were supplied with better men. I feel confident that no men in the country have greater reason to deplore the present condition of our Army, or a more earnest desire to see a sounder system introduced, than our officers.

An Army Corps is, to a well-organised military force, exactly what a department is to a large whole-

sale business house. An efficient and well-paid man is put at the head of it, with ample power and authority, and he is expected to show good results. Without some such arrangement, what opportunity would the head either of an army or a commercial establishment have for general supervision, and for considering and determining a definite policy. And this is administration. Let us suppose the head of a large business devoting himself to the details of one huge department—buying and selling some thousands of petty articles. The confusion that would certainly follow would be just such as we now see in the case of our military administration. Or let us take the case of a large manufacturing establishment, without a sound subdivision into departments with perfect and well-defined responsibility, and with every detail dependent upon the head of the firm; and add also this further consideration, that the head of the firm is continually being changed, and rarely, if ever, has any practical knowledge of the business. Throw in, besides, the fact that a large proportion of the work-people are continually running away, others are told off to catch them, another set are employed to hang about public-houses to cajole a fresh lot to accept your employment, while 5 per cent. of the whole are constantly either in prison or in hospital. What, I ask, would be the natural fate of a commercial business conducted after this fashion? Why, of course, bankruptcy would be speedy and inevitable. Yet

this is a true picture of the business of our Army as it is now conducted. It is undoubtedly the absence of a sound and sensible system of organisation in our military system that has made its demands upon our national exchequer prove so insatiable. It is costly in time of peace, and ever unready in time of war, the bare idea of which always puts the authorities at the War Office in a panic, and no wonder.

In order that business men may easily and clearly understand what an Army Corps is, I have placed fronting the title-page a chart, showing the composition of an Army Corps, the numbers and composition of which were prepared for me by a military friend of great knowledge and ability, as the most suitable for the requirements of our small Army. He took the large force of 10,780 combatants as being about the least number that would be marshalled in a Division. A Division is the usual conventional word taken to mean a force of men in which the four arms—Infantry, Cavalry, Artillery, and Engineers—are all represented.

By this chart business men will see how little mystery there is in understanding the condition of any army founded upon sound organisation; let a man understand one Army Corps and he understands readily everything else, and would be in a position to judge of the condition and cost of our Army more easily than he can understand that of almost any other of our institutions.

To organise is to construct so that one part co-operates with another, and that well-defined responsibility attaches to every man. This, at a glance, will be seen to be the case on reference to the chart referred to.

The Lieut.-General at the head of the Army Corps is responsible for everything of every kind; the Major-Generals of each Division are his right and left hands, each being responsible for his Division. They each looking to their three Brigadiers, who are responsible for the Infantry and Cavalry, and to two officers of their Staff, viz., the Lieut.-Colonels of Artillery and of Engineers, who are responsible for their respective Arms; and so, from the Lieut.-General down to the drummer-boy, all are connected, and the responsibility of each officer is clearly and well defined.

It will be seen also that an Army Corps system requires a certain proportion of each Arm, so that enlistment should be for as nearly as possible the same term of years, so as to maintain a regular flow of men into each Arm from the outside, and a regular flow from it to Furlough or Reserve.

With us, each Army Corps having a well defined but not too narrow localisation, should have all the duty and responsibility of recruiting for itself, and of looking after and paying its men on furlough; and so making our reserve a reality, each Army Corps would be in wholesome competition the one with the other.

Valuable as this system is to the army of any country, and every country is adopting it, it is especially so in the case of our own, with its numerous colonies and dependencies, which at any time might call for a small or large number of men. To supply either the Army Corps system is perfect.

As each Army Corps manages its own affairs, very little is left for the War Department to do but to maintain a general supervision and control.

At the War Office at Berlin in 1870, some 268 men managed the whole of their large army at a cost of 51,739*l.*, whereas our small army was mismanaged by 568 persons at Pall Mall, and at a cost, that same year, of 170,000*l.*

The whole cost of the War Office and Control Department in Berlin was only 170,000*l.* The cost of the same department with us was 568,000*l.*, and to which it had steadily grown from 269,000*l.* in 1853.

Reorganised upon an Army Corps system such as I advocate, the cost of administration should not be more, I find, than 122,000*l.*, making a liberal allowance for everything.

CHAPTER VIII.

Remedies—The Pension system and Long Service condemned—Men now value immediate advantages—The Short Service System—Its advantages—Creation of an efficient Reserve Force—Increase of Pay—A definite number of Commissions to be annually distributed in the Ranks—Reserve Men to be preferred for employment in the Civil Service—Comparison between the Army and the Police and our leading Railway Companies—Abundance of Recruits for the two latter Services—Improvement in the condition of the Private Soldier.

BEFORE proceeding to point out the remedies which appear to me should be applied to our military system, I would say that they are not to be found in a return to our old and *effete* system of long service and a pension—indeed, were long service compatible with a sound organisation, the pension system has utterly lost its attraction. Not only are the desertions now greater from those arms of the Service that are for long service and a pension; but as one amongst other incontestable proofs that the prospect of a pension has ceased to be an inducement, I would point out that the Inspector-General of Military Prisons, in his report for the year 1873, states that the increase of desertion among old soldiers—that is to say, among men who have served for fifteen years and upwards—is

very marked, the proportion being 8·6 per cent. for that year, compared with the 2·2 for the year before. These men, therefore, although they have served in the ranks until a pension might be said to be within their grasp, found outside attractions to be so much stronger that they did not hesitate to sacrifice it.

Nothing can be clearer than that in the present day men would value more highly an almost immediate advantage, such as could be offered to them by high pay for a few years in a Reserve, after being three years in the Army, than a deferred pension coming after 21 years, when they had forgotten their trade, and to whom 1*s.* a day in such circumstances would be almost a mockery, whilst, of course, for modern warfare they would be useless to the State as soldiers. In no commodity does the axiom, 'that a good article is the cheapest,' show itself more clearly than in the case of a military force, whether it be intended for defence or for offence; but this does not seem to be even recognised by those who should long since have discovered it. I have for years said that we must apply to the engagement of men for the Army precisely the same common-sense principles which all employers of labour adopt, and then we will get men of good character to join the ranks of the Army.

The separate enlistment for our Home and Indian and Colonial Army will give us a greatly-increased choice of men, for a better class of men will come forward, who would never have thought of coming when

there was no choice of service given to them. And ceasing to recruit for the Militia, the Army will get the pick of the agricultural labourers; and as, by the sound system I am advocating, we will only require 32,000 recruits annually, instead of 47,000 as at present, we can afford to be careful as to character.

The first thing which every employer asks is the character of the man applying for employment. It is the last thing the War Department ever thinks of asking for—indeed, it is never asked at all, and that is one of the great reasons why respectable men shun it. Is it very likely that respectable men will join a force when character goes for nothing, and has caused the very name of soldier to be regarded as a social stigma? The road into the Army is much too easy; the legitimate way out of it much too difficult.

Our Army has sunk so low that, in order to regenerate it, we should at first offer attractive terms, until we lift it to such a position as that to belong to our Army will be regarded as being as honourable as to belong to the Customs, Excise, Post Office, or any similar State Service; and with a reserve system this is essential, as a reserve force can only be safe if the men composing it are reliable men in regular work in the country, and to be depended upon during the four years they are on furlough. The four years, then, when they are on furlough, should be the very pivot of our system, and men in it should be paid such a sum as would give a reasonable guarantee that we would

get them when wanted. Therefore I would propose: First.—That in our system of enlistment we must recognise the principle of short service of not more than two or three years with the colours; thus following the cardinal principle which many European nations are adopting in their military organisation. Men during the four years they are in the Reserve should be paid 20*l.* a year—or at first even 30*l.*—and be called out, say, for a week at Easter, so as not to interfere with their occupation, and for which they should be paid a pound. In Prussia reserve men are rarely called out at all; with us, however, it would be wise to call men out this short time once a year, until the system was fairly established. The payment of their retaining fee of 20*l.* should, for obvious reasons, be made at irregular times, but with due notice, say four times a year, and always with a certificate from the employers with whom they are engaged, so that there would be guarantee for their forthcoming when wanted.

Second.—We should raise the pay of all non-commissioned officers and men by something like 4*d.* or 6*d.* a day.

Third.—Let a certain number, *but a fixed and determinate number*, whatever it may be, *of commissions in the Army* be every year awarded to non-commissioned officers by competition, which commission when obtained should be accompanied with 50*l.* of annual pay more than the usual pay of those officers who had not risen from the ranks; thus making his new position

one of a satisfactory character, and not, as at present, one frequently of discomfort; and thus, at an infinitesimal cost to the State, giving a solid attraction to good men.

Fourth.—Let every man who has served his seven years—*i.e.*, three with the colours and four in the Reserve—have the first right before all others of employment in all Government service for which he can show himself fitted.

With such advantages, in a short time the whole character of our Army would change, and we would get men for the British Army as good as flock to the British Police, and at a cost such as would bear reasonable comparison with other well-managed forces, military or civil. The Police force of the United Kingdom in 1872 numbered 43,648 men. The total cost—including clothing and accoutrements, costing 5*l.* 18*s.* 9*d.*—was 3,650,484*l.*, and they had neither difficulty in getting men nor in keeping them.

The Commissioner of Police of the Metropolis, in his report for 1873, states that 'the class of recruits seeking employment in the force during the year has been above the average, and they have been enlisted in sufficient numbers to fill the vacancies.' So much for getting men. Then as to keeping them, they have practically no desertions, and 'the number of voluntary resignations show a marked decrease from 383 in 1872 to 216 in 1873.' Facts like these speak for themselves; but then look at the Customs, Excise,

and Post Office; they have no difficulty in getting and keeping men. A short time ago some score of postmen were wanted, at salaries of from 18*s.* to 20*s.* a week, and a thousand well-dressed young men appeared. Again, look at some of our great railway companies; see what their position is as employers of labour, and they have to manage a business far more intricate, and requiring far more administrative ability than our Army, and it must be managed, not only to the satisfaction of the public, but to the profit of the shareholders.

The number of persons employed at from 15*s.* or 18*s.* to 60*s.* a week by

The Midland Railway Company	is about	. . 28,000
The Great Northern „	„	. . 10,000
The Great Western „	„	. . 7,000

The Midland employs as many men as about a third of the whole of our Home Army; yet, as a rule, not only have they no difficulty in getting men, but in keeping them, for 60 or 70 per cent. remain permanently with them, and the men who enter their service are generally of the age of from 21 to 27—the very class who, by a little arrangement, would willingly serve in the Army for three years, from 20 to 23 years of age, and go to railways and other companies during the four years they were in the Reserve, at the very age suitable for both parties, and the men would be by their training and discipline the most valuable such

employers could obtain, and would be sought for by corporations, parochial authorities, and all kinds of employers requiring trustworthy men; and their having such situations would be a guarantee that they might be found when wanted. And what recruiting sergeant would be equal to these men having their 20*l.*—merely as a retaining fee—over and above the wages of their comrades who had not served in the Army, and having moreover the preference over all others—after this four years—in any vacant Government appointment which they could prove themselves capable of filling?

Within a few years we would have the choice of the best of men for our purpose, and it would be self-acting, for men would flock to us. A voluntary system of enlistment, well managed, should give us the finest army in Europe for its size, selection can be so thoroughly made; whereas, by a conscription system, out of fairness to others, all must be taken who are any way near the mark; and in no country of Europe is a reserve system so suitable as in our own, if managed with ordinary prudence, and at the same time at a great reduction from our present monstrous expenditure, which is quite as disgraceful to us as the present dissatisfaction in the ranks.

I come now to my fifth suggestion.

Fifth.—In my opinion, if we could shorten the period of three years with the colours safely, it would be an advantage both to the State and to the soldier.

In Prussia, although three years was the nominal period of service with the colours, yet in deference to the opinion strongly expressed in 1862 in their Parliament, that two years should be the period in all cases where they found the recruit understood his work and duties, they allowed him to go home at the end of two years, and last year, or the year before, the Prussian Parliament fixed two years and three months for the infantry, and three years for other arms as the period of service.

Now I see that the first six or nine months of a recruit's life is the most trying and irksome to him, for it is then he goes through his training, a process the most of which he could go through in private life before offering himself if he liked; in other words, if he came a partly manufactured soldier, we should take him, paying him for his value; if, for instance, he came trained equal to all we could have given him in three months, pay him its value—easily reckoned, but certainly cheap to the State at 10*l.* and 20*l.* respectively, to be paid to him at the end of his service with the colours—and in each case of course his time with the colours would be proportionately reduced; indeed, a very intelligent man coming fully trained would, with one year's discipline, be a perfect soldier, and in this country we have no end of old soldiers who could give lessons in drill, and our Volunteers would be a most valuable agency in this respect; but to this I will by-and-by refer. That business men may clearly see the force of

my suggestion, I would state that training and discipline are two distinct things. Training, or drill, means the rough manufacturing of the soldier up to a certain point, when discipline begins. With discipline he begins to know and respect his officers, to learn patience, and to submit with obedience; he also knows and works with other soldiers, and this training and discipline is the complete formation of the soldier. This would be a self-acting system, and of mutual advantage to the soldier and to the State.

And now my sixth and last suggestion.

Sixth.—In place of spending any more money on Brigade Depôts, let us make use of the unspent money in putting existing barracks into a very comfortable condition as to furniture and appliances, and in providing suitable apartments for non-commissioned officers and their wives. With a little judgment and very moderate expenditure this could be done, and the head-quarters of each Army Corps, where its recruits would come to, would be made comfortable and attractive.

CHAPTER IX.

Our Volunteer Force—Merits more encouragement—Essentially different from the Militia, but might be utilised like the Militia in case of War—Comparative efficiency of the Militia and the Volunteers—Their respective Cost.

I NOW propose to offer a few remarks upon our Volunteer force. I have always regarded with favour measures which would tend to maintain, improve, and encourage our Volunteers. For expressing this opinion in the House of Commons a charge of inconsistency has been brought against me. I have been accused of seeking to abolish the Militia, and at the same time maintain the Volunteers. A little reflection, I think, will show that there is such a wide difference between the two forces that such a charge is altogether groundless.

Before the Volunteer force was established, the Militia was called upon, in the event of war and in the absence of regular troops, to perform many of the duties usually discharged by the soldiers of the Line. If we invaded a foreign country, as was the case during the Crimean War, they performed garrison duty at home, and in other ways they made themselves

useful. But all such services could now, and would, under similar circumstances, be as well and as efficiently discharged by our Volunteers. Since the Volunteer force was organised in 1859, the special occupation of the Militia, therefore, has practically gone. Our Volunteers, moreover, do not in any way interfere with the supply of recruits for the Line, whereas the Militia, as I have previously pointed out, does. Our Volunteer force is composed of men who, both for physique and intelligence, are above the class from which the ranks of the Line and the Milita are usually recruited. Were a little prudence exercised, however, our Volunteers might be made available to a valuable extent in supplying that superior class of men to the Army which we are all so anxious to see it possess. This might be attained by our giving a bonus to recruits according to their proficiency in drill. A Volunteer, I will suppose, enlists for the Line, and it is found on examination that he has anticipated his drill, say by six months. In a word, he is a ready-made soldier up to that point, and for that we should be prepared to pay him a bonus of 20*l.* and an additional 5*l.* to the funds of the Volunteer regiment from which he came; and of course his term with the colours would be proportionately reduced. Such a system would be self-acting, and productive of many advantages. It would be economical to the State, and it would be advantageous to the Volunteer force and to the recruit himself.

Our Volunteers, since their establishment, have proved to be steady and persevering. They rank among their number some of the best rifle shots in the world. With the numerous good Sergeant-Instructors they possess, we might soon obtain from their ranks such a number of men as would greatly improve our regiments of the Line. To these men we might confidently look for a supply of efficient non-commissioned officers.

This would constitute the kind of feeling which our Army really requires, and would be very different indeed from the spurious system which now prevails of supplying the Line with the worst of our Militiamen.

Our Volunteers, moreover, should be further encouraged by the War Department. Drill grounds and shooting ranges might be supplied to them, as also additional articles of clothing and accoutrements.

The efficiency and value of our Volunteers as a military force may be judged of by an official return which I have placed in the Appendix.[1] It shows that out of a total number of men enrolled of 175,000, no fewer than 161,000 passed as efficient, while 140,000 were present at the annual official inspection in 1874. Let us look for a moment at the composition of this force. It embraces no fewer than 30,800 efficient Artillerymen, and I have reason to know that among these Artillerymen are some of the best and most intelligent mechanics to be found in the country. These men would be invaluable either for garrison duty in

[1] Appendix VII., p. 155.

the event of war, or for co-operation with the 18,000 Artillerymen we possess in the Army. Artillery is an arm of our military service which is daily growing in importance, and it is satisfactory to find that it forms such a large proportion of our Volunteer force. As far as efficiency is concerned, I am satisfied that after a short practice they would compete on an equal footing with the artillery of the Line.

The Engineers also are composed of much the same class of men, and the efficients numbered no fewer than 5,800 in our Volunteer force. Like the Artillerymen, their services would be most valuable when acting in co-operation with the 3,600 Engineers of our regular army.

Let me now contrast our Militia and Volunteer forces by the aid of a few figures. The total number of men in the Militia who appeared at training was but 74,000, as against 140,000 Volunteers. The number of Artillerymen in the Militia is but 12,000, as against 30,800 Volunteer Artillerymen. The cost of the Militia is about 1,250,000*l.*; of the Volunteers, 640,000*l.*, or less than one-half. The Volunteer force also, I must again repeat, does not interfere in the slightest degree with recruiting for the Army; the Militia, on the contrary, does. These, I think, are facts sufficient to show that the forces are very different in their character, and they establish clearly that there would be no inconsistency in advocating the abolition of the one and the maintenance of the other.

The Volunteers have a fair proportion of all arms, except Cavalry, and that should be got over by simply incorporating with them the Yeomanry, numbering nearly 10,000, and then the whole force should be divided into Army Corps, ready to link with the five Army Corps of the Line.

CHAPTER X.

The financial effects of the changes suggested—The great wealth of the Nation an obstacle to economy—The German Military Budget of 1870—Estimated Cost of the British Army on an improved model—Conscription not the real cause of the limited expenditure in Germany—The Regimental system revived through Army Corps—Value and Importance of an Independent Audit of Military Expenditure.

I NOW come to the consideration of the financial merits of the changes which I advocate. The people almost intuitively feel that our military expenditure is excessive, and have more reason than ever to do so since their experience of the past four years.

A German once said to me, truly, that nothing stood more in the way of the sound organisation of our Army than our great wealth; his own nation, being poor, in 1807 had to devise with care a system at once efficient and economical; we think everything is to be cured merely by more money; indeed, manifest as are the causes which now threaten the very existence of our Army, nothing would astonish me less than that the War Department should say that they had come to the conclusion that a mere increase of pay would cure everything, and boldly ask the House of

Commons to add half a million or a million a year to our Army Estimates, in order to give 4*d.* or 6*d.* a day of increased pay.

Merely an increase of pay without a thorough re-organisation upon modern principles, would do more harm than good, and, besides, make us the laughing-stock of Europe.

For the miserable results which I have been pointing out in the previous pages, our average annual expenditure for the past four years—after deducting repayments by the Navy, and not taking into account payments for the Abolition of Purchase and Brigade Depôts, but adding cost of fortifications —was 13,600,000*l.*

Now, in 1870, what was the cost of the great army of Prussia? Here it is:—

PRUSSIAN MILITARY BUDGET, 1870.

Peace Establishment of 315,526 men, 73,307 horses, 808 field guns.
Expandable in war to 944,421 „ 193,930 „ 1680 „

1.

	£	£
1. Troops	3,332,989	
2. General Staff Intendance, Governors of Fortresses	306,033	
3. Officers and Sundry Services . .	627,489	
4. Divine Service	22,453	
5. Military Justice	19,737	
6. Hospital Service	210,884	
7. Purchase of Horses and Expenses .	176,570	
		4,696,155

2.	£	
8. Provisions and Forage . . .	2,215,859	
9. Clothing	701,722	
10. Artillery, Armaments, &c. . .	334,990	£
		3,252,571
3.		
11. New Barracks and Utensils . .	254,466	
12. Current Expenditure . . .	195,022	
13. Building and Maintaining Fortifications and Fortresses . . .	242,579	
		692,067
4.		
14. Military Education . . .	96,579	
15. Travelling and Miscellaneous Service	130,990	
16. Administration of the Army . .	51,739	
		279,308
		8,920,101
Non-effective Service.		
Pensions, Officers, Employés, and Invalids, Prussia	884,471	
Government, addition to Widows and Children, Prussia . .	123,187	
Mecklenburg and Saxony, say . .	210,000	
		1,217,658
		£10,137,759
Paid by friends		505,000
		£10,642,759

NOTE.—I found at Berlin that the pay of the soldier was so small their friends had to allow them something extra, amounting to one silver groschen a day, or 35*s.* 9*d.* a year, so I think it fair to add that amount to the cost of their army.

To this Budget let me append a few notes:—

NOTES ON BUDGET.

No. 4.—Divine service is less costly than with us, because the number of garrison chapels is very small. The soldiers are taken at least once a month to a public place of worship; a sensible system, which we might well adopt.

No. 6.—The hospitals could accommodate 16,758 sick. In 1868 7,390 soldiers were on an average daily in hospital. In 1872 in the British Army, out of 92,000, 3,628 were constantly in hospital.

No. 7.—6,492 horses were bought, at an average of 24*l.* each, costing in all 153,000*l.*; besides keeping and feeding 73,000 horses. In three years, 1871–2 and 3, we bought only 6,142, costing about 40*l.* each; or on an average, 2,050 horses a year, costing 82,000*l.* We only kept and fed 15,000.

WAGGONS.—Every Army Corps has all its field waggons, &c., ready complete. Ours, where are they?

No. 9.—CLOTHING.—Complete suits of clothing are always kept in store for the whole of the Prussian reserve forces.

DESERTERS.—Expense of arrest and transport of deserters and support of military prisoners on the march cost 445*l.* What does ours cost?

N.B.—Prussia is an expensive country to defend, having so great a land frontier. Many fortifications are required, yet all that expenditure is included in the Military Budget. With us, in addition to our army estimates, we have raised, under various Acts of Parliament since 1860 to 1874, 6,775,085*l.*

I beg the reader's careful consideration of this Budget. He will see that it is the power of sound organisation that gives the great results which Prussia has attained; and although it is true that conscription gives her a cheap army, as regards pay, yet if both countries got their men for nothing, it will be seen that this would not alter the disparity between the two systems, as to management or otherwise.

For my own satisfaction, I made an estimate of the cost of the plan which I advocate. It was prepared with great care, and has been corrected by a military friend of great ability It is as follows:—

ESTIMATE.

	Officers and Men.		£	£
		Colonies.		
	22,000	Cost founded upon present estimate	1,556,152	
		Gift of 30*l.* a man on leaving the service at end of seven years instead of a pension	90,000	
				1,646,152
		Education, as per estimate, 1874-5 (exclusive of Colonies)	132,000	
		Works and Buildings (exclusive of 185,000*l.* for Colonies) . . .	250,000	
		Divine Service (exclusive of Colonies). . . .	36,000	
		Administration . . .	122,000	
		Artillery, Armaments, &c. .	200,000	
	1,345	Hospital Corps } Pay .		740,000
	4,444	Garrison Artillery } Pay .	294,996	
	1,500	Coast Brigade . } Pay .		
		Clothing, barracks, fuel, light, medical attendance	68,371	
				363,367
Men		11,839. Pay, 525,000*l.* × 5	2,625,000	
		„ Clothing, barracks,		
		Army Corps.		
		&c., 115,377*l.* × 5 .	576,885	
Horses		Guns and accoutrements, 33,600*l.* × 5 . . .	168,000	
15,000		Keep of 300 horses and harness repairs, 120,000*l.* × 5	600,000	
	59,195	Purchase 300 horses, and expenses, 13,500 × 5 .	81,000	
15,000	88,484	Total. . 807,477		4,050,885
				6,800,404

Reserve Forces.

		£	
80,000	Trained men on furlough 20*l.* a-year . . .	1,600,000	
	Ditto, pay and expenses (week's training), 1*l.* .	80,000	
	Ditto, clothing, arms, &c. 2*l.* 10*s.* . . .	200,000	£ 1,880,000
170,000	Volunteers . . .	640,000	
10,000	Yeomanry . . .	80,000	720,000
			9,400,404
	Pensions, say . . .		1,000,000
348,848			£10,400,404

NOTE.—The above estimate gives 12*s.* 9*d.* a week of pay to all privates, besides lodging, fuel, light, clothing, and medical attendance, or in all equal to a total yearly pay of 41*l.* 14*s.* 5*d.*, and provides complete suits of clothing and arms for the reserves. The above estimate provides for officers always with the colours sufficient for the Reserve when called out in case of war, proportionately of the same number and rank as the Prussian Army.

N.B.—Until the present pension list of 2,210,000*l.* is decreased, the estimates would be equal to 11,600,000*l.*

If the pay suggested did not attract good men, even the addition of 6*d.* a day would only be 757,000*l.* a year.

It may be asked why even should our Army cost so much as 10,400,000*l.*, when Prussia only spent 10,600,000*l.* for a much greater force. My answer is that the men comprising the Army which I propose we should have, would be the finest in Europe, men equal in every respect to our British police. Not only

would their pay when with the colours be four times as much as the pay of the Prussian soldier, but they would be better clothed and housed; and, moreover, whilst the pay of the Prussian soldier on furlough is nothing, the cost of paying ours I put at 1,680,000*l.*, and then also the charge of 720,000*l.* for the Volunteers and Yeomanry is of the same nature; but then the strain upon the country for recruits will be very small compared with Prussia. She raised 100,000 recruits every year to maintain a standing of 300,000 men, which at the end of seven years comes up to a war strength of 640,000 men, or to a grand total of 940,000 at the end of twelve years.

By the plan which I advocate we would raise for our Home and Colonial Army 23,000 recruits annually, to maintain a standing Army of 88,000, coming up to a war strength of 168,000, and of 250,000 at the end of twelve years. A product the same in proportion to the initial number of recruits in each case.

I have no doubt that on the establishment of the Army Corps system such a healthy competition would arise between the five Lieutenant-Generals at the head of the several Army Corps that a considerable reduction in the cost that I have reckoned upon would ensue. It is to the eye of the master that we must look for that watchful care which produces success. In our Army, at present, we have no such thing.

No competition, no rivalry exists. Establish the Army Corps system, and wholesome rivalry imme-

diately commences; each Lieutenant-General will vie with another in endeavouring to make his Army Corps the most attractive to good men; the most attached to by its reserves; the most economical in its management, and in showing his superior skill in handling his men in the field on the occasion of the annual Autumn Manœuvres. We are not unfrequently reminded of the value of the Regimental system, and no doubt it has advantages, now the regimental system is dead; but the Army Corps system will revive it, and all that *esprit de corps* which existed in regiments may now reappear, but upon modern principles—the more extended form of Army Corps.

I would here also add that with a better class of men in our Army, like the Prussians, we should require fewer officers. Officers are in relation to soldiers just what overlookers are to *employés*, and in proportion as the *employés* are intelligent or the reverse, so is the number of overlookers needed.[1]

Were it not that I feel it is most undesirable to extend the limits of this pamphlet, I could point out clearly wherein the savings I speak of would arise. But under whatever system our military affairs in the future may be administered, one great defect exists now, which it is imperatively necessary Parliament should correct. I allude to the absence of an independent audit of the expenditure incurred by the War Department.

[1] See Appendix VI., page 153.

It is acknowledged on all hands that no more important financial reform has been effected during the present generation than the placing of the accounts of the Civil Service and Revenue Departments under the control of an officer responsible to the House of Commons, and it passes my comprehension to understand why this same rule is not at once extended to the accounts of the War Department. Why should that department be permitted greater latitude and laxity in the expenditure of the money voted by Parliament than the Home Office, the Foreign Office, and even the Treasury itself.

CHAPTER XI.

The condition of the Army in India—Its inefficiency and extravagant Cost—The burden which it imposes upon the natives of India—Their opinion of it—Our great Military expenditure a fit subject for the consideration of Merchants and Manufacturers—Measures of Reform—A separate system of Recruiting for India necessary—The Economy that would be thereby effected—Consideration of some objections which have been offered.

I MAY claim, I think, to have clearly shown that the condition of our Army at home is a mere mass of confusion. I will now briefly glance at the condition of our Indian Army—that other branch of our military force which I also asserted stood very much in need of reform. The position of our Army in India, as regards efficiency and extravagant cost, is really worse than that of our Home Army. And so far as it is concerned, it ought to be borne in mind that we are really dealing with other people's money, and it becomes us therefore to be all the more careful and prudent about it. While spending money which is our own, we can afford to do as we like. The European forces we maintain in India are kept there for the purpose of retaining our possession of that country, and we make the races whom we

have conquered pay for them. Now our military expenditure in India is, if possible, even more unsatisfactory than it is at home, and it presses much more severely upon our fellow-subjects in India. They have plainly and clearly expressed their views upon the question, and just as in the case of our Continental neighbours, who, I have observed, know well the state and condition of our Home Army, so do the natives of India show that they are more conversant with our military position in that country than probably we are ourselves.

The growth of our military expenditure in India has been the source of much dissatisfaction, and very naturally so. In 1853 Mr. Bright, when speaking of India in relation to the great cost of the Army, remarked that it amounted to twelve millions sterling, or about equal to the whole land revenue of the Indian Empire. After the Mutiny the expenditure having largely increased, a military commission was appointed, and after a careful scrutiny the members reported that, in their opinion, the total expenditure upon the Indian Army and all its branches should be brought down to the amount of twelve millions annually. Instead, however, of this having been done, the expenditure has been permitted to grow and increase year by year, until in 1871-72 it reached the enormous sum of eighteen millions sterling! And notwithstanding this increased expenditure the strength and efficiency of the Army had not improved.

The ordinary sources of revenue in India were unable to bear this increased expenditure. The land tax was felt and acknowledged to be as heavy as the people could well pay. The Indian Government were compelled to rack their brains for a new tax. They hit upon the income tax, and the imposition of it roused such a feeling of irritation and opposition that it had ultimately to be withdrawn. The ill effects which it produced, however, I fear will be more lasting, for it roused the natives of India, and caused them to examine into the source of such extravagant expenditure. In 1871, a native of India, writing to the *Times* newspaper respecting certain opinions expressed by Lord Napier about the native princes in India, said, 'That the military expenditure of India is one of the main causes of these detested taxes which the Government has of late been so freely imposing upon the people.' The tax more especially alluded to here was the income tax imposed in 1860, and from which about a million sterling was derived. It has, as I have just remarked, in deference to the outcry made against it by the Indian people, since been repealed.

The merchants and manufacturers of Lancashire, I observe, are far from satisfied with another Indian tax, which, but for our costly military armaments in India, might easily be dispensed with. A deputation of them waited a few weeks ago upon Lord Salisbury, to protest against the import duties levied upon our manufactures sent into India. And what was the answer of the

noble lord? Not that he would endeavour to reduce the military expenditure, and so render the tax unnecessary, but simply that he could do nothing for the gentlemen who waited upon him, because the 800,000*l.* the import duties yielded was an amount of revenue he could not afford to forego. Richard Cobden was accustomed to say that the first difficulty he had to overcome in pressing for a repeal of the Corn Laws was to get the farmers of England to understand their own interest. How long will it be before the manufacturers and merchants of England are aroused to see how closely their own interests are bound up in Army Reform, both at home and in India? I venture to urge that it is a question of vital importance to them, and well worth the constant and careful attention of every Chamber of Commerce in the kingdom.

A partial reduction in the expenditure upon our Indian Army has taken place. By the last accounts published, the expenditure for 1872–3, including barracks, &c., is given as under 16,674,170*l.*; and under Lord Northbrook, who is acquainted with military questions, it is fair to expect some radical reduction and some change in our present unsound and costly system of recruiting for India; but from what we see of public life, reforms are not rapidly effected, and unless the eye and the ear of the public are on the alert nothing is done.

Within the limits now at my disposal, it would be impossible for me to go into the whole question of the

reform of our Indian Army. The main point which I wish to make clear is that until we give up our present system of recruiting for general service, and adopt a separate enlistment for Home service and for Indian and Colonial service, we cannot hope for any material improvement in either; we will not get willing service for either army, nor will we reduce the dissatisfaction and the extravagance which exist. The present system of recruiting for India is not only most unsound and costly, as regards India, but it is most detrimental to recruiting for our Home Army.

The whole question of recruiting for India has been raised most fully before a Committee of the House of Commons during the past two Sessions, and the evidence very clearly shows that the recruits formerly obtained by the East India Company at Warley were better than those now obtained, and at an average cost for all arms of 27*l.*, with about three months' drill; whereas the Indian Government now contracts to pay 136*l.* for a Cavalry recruit of ten months' drill, and for an Infantry recruit of seven months' drill 63*l.*

It is also shown that since the amalgamation of the two armies the War Office has practically the monopoly of supplying a soldier, and India has to go to that one manufactory alone, and pay not only an extravagant price, but in place of getting the article agreed and paid for—viz., a Cavalry soldier of ten months' training for 136*l.*, an Infantry soldier of seven months' training for 63*l.*—it is found that for four years

the average training of the Cavalry soldier supplied, instead of being 10 months, was 4 months 9 days; and the Infantry, instead of 9 months, was 3 months 22 days, and Artillery much the same. The India Office say they could recruit a great deal cheaper and better themselves. No doubt they could, not only with advantage to the Indian service, but with great advantage to our home service. India suffers from the desertions, mortality, and immorality of our home army, for we charge them a proportion of the whole cost; and from much of this if in their own hands they would be comparatively free.

The Indian Service is most popular, and if we offered a separate enlistment for India and our colonies for a term of 6 or 7 years, then to end (unless we re-engaged them for 2 or 3 more), and gave a lump sum in hand at the conclusion of our engagement with them, it would be much more satisfactory to all parties than the granting of a pension after a long period of service. Many of them would find permanent civil employment in the increasing industrial and commercial establishments in India and our colonies. The development of the railway system in India must open a wide field of employment of this kind. With a short service system of three years for our Home Army, a distinct and separate enlistment for India and the Colonies becomes absolutely necessary. We now send out regiments to India consisting of men of all ages, some much too old. By separate enlistment suitable

men only would be sent; and that this is not merely a money question I will show by referring to the influeuce of age on the mortality of our troops in India. The extract from the Army Medical Report bearing upon this point will be found in the Appendix.[1]

The period that all medical testimony shows is the best for men to stay in India is five or six years. With a six years' enlistment, young men of twenty going out would give not only a better army than we now have, but would save the lives of hundreds of men annually, who die because they either go out to India too old or remain there too long. A regiment now goes out with men of all ages, whereas by separate enlistment young men would be sent out, at an age when the risk would be comparatively little; moreover, the extent of invaliding would be greatly diminished, and the cost of transport would certainly not be increased although the period of service were shortened.

But, advantageous as a separate system of enlistment would be to India, it would unquestionably also prove of the greatest service to the recruiting for our Home Army. It would enable us to adopt a uniform system of short service with perfect simplicity of engagement, and this would induce thousands of men to join, who would on no account enlist so long as it is uncertain whether they may be ordered abroad on a day's notice, and for a period of six years at least. Is it consistent with common sense, or in accordance with

[1] See Appendix, page 149.

our every-day experience, to expect, for instance, that men will come forward freely and join, say a police service, upon the understanding that they may be any day shipped to Calcutta or to the West Indies, without their inclination being consulted?

Objections, I am aware, have been taken to separate systems of recruiting for our home and foreign armies; but a candid consideration of them will show, I think, that they are not entitled to much weight.

It is alleged that since the amalgamation of the Home and Indian armies they have become one force, and all in it should be held liable for service anywhere. But the enlistment of men for six or seven years' service in India and the Colonies, and for three years' service at home, need not interfere with the administration of the Army as one force.

Another objection is, that a separate enlistment would induce competition, and it is represented that all recruits should be trained and controlled by the War Department. There is no reason why recruiting should not be, as now, entirely controlled by the War Department. The recruits for India might be passed directly to a separate depôt. Competition would not arise under separate enlistment, it would simply enable the recruiting officer to offer to a man a choice of services, the conditions of each of which he would clearly comprehend and understand. Until we do this, I repeat we cannot expect to get the right men for either.

A separate system of enlistment for India would in no way alter the position of the officers of the Army who might serve as at present either at Home, in India, or the Colonies.

I may here say that with 60,000 British soldiers in India on six or seven years' service, the number of exchanges and reliefs annually would not entail more cost than at present, and there cannot be a doubt that the troops serving in India might be conveyed to and from by contract at a much lower cost than now.

CHAPTER XII.

Immorality of our present system—The remedy—The British Soldier ought to be respected and not shunned.

In the foregoing pages I have mainly looked at the inefficiency and great cost of our present system, and have pointed out what appears to me to be the cure; but are there no higher considerations than military efficiency and mere money saving?

As a Christian nation, surely the principles of the religion we profess deserve to be recognised and held in remembrance. But at the present time I confess it appears to me that under our military system morality and immorality are regarded very much in the same light. I have asked for years this question, Why should the moral law enjoined upon us by our national faith be formally set aside and disregarded in this important service of the State and in no other?

The agitation for a repeal of the Contagious Diseases Acts has drawn attention to the immorality inseparably connected with our present military system, and has undoubtedly shown that a short service system fully carried out would prevent men from

being separated, as they now generally are when they enter the Army, from the influence of their family, and condemned to prolonged celibacy, and to all the intense monotony and dangerous dulness inseparable from barrack life, especially so after a few years, when a man has learnt his duties as fully as he possibly can learn them, and is employed in repeating them, day by day, *ad nauseam.*

No one can be long in the vicinity of a large barracks without seeing the bad effects of placing men in such unfavourable circumstances.

Were the whole people acquainted with our present system, it would so shock their consciences that I am convinced that they would be most earnest and hearty in demanding immediate military reform.

Indeed, did they hear through our newspaper correspondents that such a system existed anywhere else in the world, they would raise their eyes in pious horror, and missionaries without delay would be despatched to that benighted nation in the hope of converting the people.

Our Army, in place of being the means of deteriorating our population, could, and should, be the means of improving it.

May the day soon come when a British soldier, in place of being shunned by a family, and debarred from social standing as an outcast, will be regarded as

one belonging to an honourable and intelligent body of men, who are only for a short time separated from home and domestic ties, and that for the highest of purposes—the protection and safety of the nation!

CHAPTER XIII.

The Mobilisation of our Forces.[1]

I PROPOSE now to look at the latest scheme suggested by the War Office. It has just been promulgated in the Army List of last month, and is entitled 'The Mobilisation of our forces.' Before, however, dealing with this scheme, the details of which I am sure will greatly astonish you, it will be well to look back at the plan of reorganisation which the same department proposed in 1872, the origin of which was undoubtedly the Franco-German war of 1870. In that year we saw the two greatest military powers in Europe engage in a terrible and disastrous war. On one side we had Germany with an army of 940,000 men, with guns, carriages, horses and all *materiel* of war complete, and with its mobilisation so perfect that in a few days she threw an irresistible force upon the frontiers of France; and we were all the more astonished when we found that this great military force was maintained in its efficiency for ten millions and a half of annual expenditure. The state of things in France presented a remarkable contrast to all this. The disclosures made after the war show that the French army,

[1] Speech at Manchester Reform Club, January 10, 1876.

although maintained at a much greater cost, was both inefficient and seriously disorganised. France witnessed the defeat of Austria in 1866, but she was slow to learn the lesson which that defeat might have taught her. It was only after eighteen months of disputation between the Emperor and his military advisers that Marshal Niel, the Minister of War, brought forward his scheme for enlarging the French Army. These proposals, delayed so long, were limited to the creation of the Garde Mobile, and as an able writer in a recent number of 'Blackwood's Magazine' has said, France thus proclaimed to Europe that in her estimation numbers were everything in war, and organisation nothing. From that time forward the Garde Mobile of France, with almost no training, was invariably estimated as representing 500,000 efficient soldiers. The Military force of France was given out as equal to 985,000 men, but Marshal le Bœuf has since stated in evidence that only 567,000 of these could really be relied upon. And from this latter number there fell to be deducted the sick, the non-combatant, and the contingent in Algeria, amounting to 130,000 men, and from the balance of 437,000, the reserves numbering 137,000 had also to be deducted, thus leaving an immediate available force of not more than 300,000 men at the outside. So far as *materiel* was concerned, the condition of the French army was even still worse; as an instance—57,000 guns were calculated as available for use, when the fact was that they had been sold for old

iron at 6*s.* a piece. Added to the absence of discipline among the men, the disorganisation and disorder in the administration produced a state of things which was positively appalling. Large numbers of the men, when called upon to join their regiments, had to travel half-way over the kingdom before they could reach their depôts, and again numerous regiments were found hundreds of miles away from these depôts. Soldiers were scattered everywhere throughout the length and breadth of France seeking their comrades. To use the language of the writer whom I have already quoted, 'The ministry was convinced that its management was excellent; it would listen to no complaints, it would follow no advice. It calmly continued its habits and traditions, the essential principle of which was to leave things as they were.' In a word, this dominant military clique was full of arrogance and obstinacy, begotten of pride and ignorance, and would listen to nobody.

Now, with both these examples before us, what did we do when we came to consider our position in 1870? The Secretary of State for War at the beginning of that year, when everything wore a peaceful aspect, informed the House of Commons that the army estimates which he had just introduced provided for 113,100 regular troops for Home and Colonial service, and for 134,000 militia. This force was to cost 12,965,000*l.* In August of the same year, 1870, after the war had broken out, a panic as usual seized hold

of our military authorities. The Secretary of State then coolly informed the House of Commons that 84,000 was the real number of the existing militia force, and he proposed a vote of 20,000 additional men for the regular army, which was agreed to.

The War Department appeared about this time to have begun to consider how our forces should be organised. In 1872 they submitted a scheme to Parliament, which scheme they said if assented to would put everything in perfect order, and panics would cease to be, and the extravagant cost of our army would diminish.

To quote the words of an official report upon this scheme, it was expressly devised to benefit the militia. The Reorganisation Committee of the War Office in their final report, add 'The Reorganisation here submitted will, it is hoped, supply a simple expeditious machinery for calling into action the whole military forces of the empire or any portion thereof according to the demands of any emergency.' Could any language be clearer than this? Well you have paid, or at all events you have agreed to pay, 3½ millions sterling, in order that this scheme should be fulfilled as the War Department desired, and now in less than four years a new scheme is promulgated which sets the first entirely aside and renders your expenditure vain.

In the face of facts like these I ask what confidence can you have in those who are responsible for the ad-

ministration of our military affairs? Three years ago you were told, if you consented to the expenditure of this money that your military forces would be made perfectly efficient, and now His Royal Highness Commanding in Chief comes before the public and informs us, that as war may be upon us within a few weeks, it is necessary to reorganise our forces. Once more I may here say that I protested against the organisation scheme of 1872 as vehemently as I could. I asserted that we were adhering to principles of military administration and discipline which had been utterly condemned by all the experience of European warfare during the last nine years.

I now come to what appears to me to be the last drop in the cup of humiliation which military incapacity would force upon the nation, and that is the scheme for the so-called mobilisation of our military forces to which I have referred. Personally I have every reason to be satisfied with the acknowledgment of the fact on the part of the War Department that an army corps system is practicable in this country. I have long urged its importance and its necessity, but I have been invariably met with the objection from the representatives of the War Office in the House of Commons, that such a system was with us impracticable, and that it was incompatible with the necessities of our Indian and Colonial Services. I continually pointed out that it was really more essential to us from the fact that we had foreign possessions to protect, and now it would

appear that the War Department has discovered that this is the case. Their plan of effecting it, however, is anything but sound and satisfactory. One great reason why I have always dwelt so much upon the importance of reorganising our army upon the Army Corps system was that I was satisfied that it would expose the sham which our present military system really is. The War Office therefore have on this occasion so far assisted me.

If you will allow me, I think I will be able to show you clearly what a muddle and a mess our military administration has become. Our authorities are evidently greatly perplexed as to this matter of mobilisation. They do not possess the raw material for their scheme. They have neither men nor guns, but they have at the same time such a multitude of officers, that their ingenuity has been taxed to provide employment for them.

In 1872 I spoke strongly against our scheme for reorganisation because it failed to give a reserve system even a chance. A reserve system demands as a first necessity good men. And good men I urged then, and urge now, can only be obtained by a real system of short service and deferred high pay in the reserve. In place of this we have continued to draw our recruits from the same classes as before, and we have hoped to attract them into the reserve by the wretched pay of 4*d.* a day.

Now I protest against the scheme recently published by the War authorities having any claim to be

called an Army Corps system; it is nothing of the kind. An Army Corps system means an army divided into equal parts, each of these parts being composed of a fair proportion of the various arms of the service complete and perfect in itself and the men composing it being drilled and accustomed to act together. It is also necessary that the troops composing an Army Corps should reside within a moderate radius of its head-quarters, and be ready to concentrate without a moment's unnecessary delay on an order being given; and each Army Corps should be as like another as peas in a pod, so that the general at the head of each will be in fair competition the one with the other. Now let us look at the eight Army Corps proposed to be established by this new scheme. The force required is estimated at 102,636 trained men, and 187,168 militiamen who have not been trained; and how are these divided? We have one Army Corps numbering 36,228 composed altogether of regular troops; another is to consist of 24,142 regulars and 12,086 militiamen; a third is to consist of 12,086 regulars and 24,142 militiamen. The other five are alike, having each 6,038 regulars and 30,190 militiamen. Then there is the garrison army, which is to be composed of 21,566 regulars and 34,301 militiamen, a total of 124,202 regulars, and 221,469 militia.

As regards mere numbers then, this scheme will involve an increase of one-fifth in our regular army, and it will more than double our militia. Now what

prospect have we of obtaining this large additional number of men? Take the militia for example: in 1872 the House of Commons authorised the enrolment of 139,000 militiamen, but from that day to this we have never been able to muster more than 100,000 in round numbers.

Upon what then do our military authorities base their hope of obtaining greatly more than double this number? But let us grant that the men can be got. I will show that this scheme of mobilisation is no more than a delusion and a sham. Three-fourths of these Army Corps are to be composed of militia—which are thrown about in the most grotesque manner, as if to make annual trainings in Army Corps impossible, and to insure the wildest confusion in case of invasion.

I cannot help thinking that our War Office authorities have carefully studied the criticism of the French Military system to which I have referred as having appeared in 'Blackwood's Magazine,' and it appears to me that they have endeavoured to imitate, and if possible to exaggerate, the fatal defects which proved the ruin of France. Although they had deliberately planned to provide all that would go to fulfil the imaginary disastrous battle of Dorking, they could not possibly have devised anything better. Our Military Authorities are at the present moment committing the same grand blunder which proved to be the weakness of the French in 1870; they are trusting to numbers rather than to discipline and efficiency. And now as

to organisation you will remember that I referred to the startling disclosures made respecting the deficiencies of the French upon this point.

When the war broke out many of their men had to travel 400 miles to reach their depôts, and the disorganisation and confusion created was most lamentable. But our Military Authorities have far outvied the French in increasing the difficulties of concentration; their scheme of Mobilisation is so unsound, and so full of palpable blunders that I confess my difficulty is to know which to select as the most telling examples. But let me take the third division of their second Army Corps with head-quarters at Dorking in Surrey; a portion of it is the Perth Militia which will have to travel 473 miles to reach their depôt; the Ayr and Renfrew Militia, which also form part of this division, will have to travel almost as far, whilst from the other end of the kingdom the Cork Militia is to find its way a distance of 566 miles to meet them, and the Galway Militia will have to travel nearly as far. Here a point arises which we must consider, Are we to understand that the War Department seriously intends that all these regiments of Militia from the extreme corners of Scotland and of Ireland are to travel to Dorking and back, travelling about 1,000 miles each every year for their annual training? If so what a scandalous waste of time and of money this must involve. Yet without this how is the Army Corps to be trained and disciplined? How is its commanding officer to become

acquainted with the qualities and capacity of his troops? If we accept either proposition, this Mobilisation scheme will involve us in an enormous additional expense, and it is what I have already ventured to say of it, nothing but a delusion and a sham. Could you imagine a schoolboy concocting a scheme of Mobilisation more silly or more absurd?

Now I will take the division the head-quarters of which are to be at Dublin. The Edinburgh Militia are to come there travelling 250 miles, and the Inverness Militia are to join them travelling 336 miles. Then look at Scotland, the division at Melrose is to be supplied by the Militia from York, from Westmoreland, and from Fermanagh. But I need not multiply examples of this kind; these are enough to show you that the scheme is founded upon no sound principle. I have, however, some further illustrations to give you of this Military burlesque. Let us look at the force with which it is proposed to defend Tilbury Fort in the event of an invasion. The Militia of Northumberland, the Argyle and Bute Militia are to be there, the Militia of Antrim are also to be there, so that forces from the most extreme distances in England, Scotland, and Ireland are to be concentrated on the banks of the Thames. Portsmouth is to be defended by the Militia from Haddington, from Forfar and from Aberdeen. Only think of our most important port on the Southern coast being dependent for its defence upon a Militia force from Aberdeen, which has to travel 610 miles

before it can reach it. And now I come to a feature in this Mobilisation scheme which I am sure will not fail to afford you much amusement. You must all remember the interest and excitement created during the Franco-Prussian War by the actions of the German Uhlans; their foresight, their intelligence, their excellent horsemanship, good training and the knowledge they possessed of the enemy's country attracted universal admiration. These Uhlans form a very important branch of the German Army, and are connected with each Army Corps. Our military authorities have evidently a strong desire to emulate them, and in order to make John Bull believe that this important feature in an Army Corps system has not been neglected, they have determined upon giving us our Uhlans in the shape of the Yeomanry Cavalry. Now I am not inclined to be hard upon our Yeomanry; there are no doubt many excellent horsemen among them, and their training and discipline, is perhaps as good as could be expected from their eight days' practice in a year. How far their qualifications in these respects are to be compared with those possessed by the carefully trained German Uhlans I will leave you to judge. They might have been of some value certainly as guides and scouts in their own counties, for the majority of them do possess a fair knowledge of their own neighbourhood, but our Military Authorities, with that perverseness which characterises their whole scheme, seek to deprive them even of this small

value which they might possess. The Yeomanry of Buckingham, for example, are to muster and to serve in Essex; the Yeomanry of Oxford are to go to Surrey to serve as guides to the Perth and Cork Militia in that beautiful county; the Yeomanry of Warwick are to travel to Redhill to guide the Tyrone Militia; and the Staffordshire Yeomanry are to travel 126 miles to Croydon to perform the same good service to the Kilkenny Militia; the Leicestershire Yeomanry are to travel 145 miles to Tunbridge Wells; the Ayrshire Yeomanry are to go to Edinburgh to guide the Kerry Militia; while the horsemen of Northumberland are to travel to Melrose to show the Fermanagh Militia through the roads and lanes of Roxburghshire.

But this is not the whole case, when the Perth and Cork militia reach Dorking that is but the rendezvous of their division, which division may have to march upon another point, to be indicated by the Commander-in-Chief.

Now just suppose for a moment that a foreign enemy threatened a descent upon Lancashire, and that all our strength was to be concentrated there without delay, you would have the extraordinary spectacle of a regiment of militia travelling from Perth to Dorking, and from Dorking back again to Lancashire half-way home. Can you conceive of a scheme more likely to invite delay and provoke disaster? As this plan of organi-

sation has been originated by the most able men in the War Office—the Intelligence Department—there must surely be something about it which some one can understand; but before we know who he is we shall have to wait, I suppose, for the meeting of Parliament.

Who will venture to estimate the cost of this extraordinary scheme? How many millions more will be swallowed up in still further enfeebling our already very feeble military force? Let me also remind you of the fact that one of the most important advantages which a nation can obtain from a sound Army Corps system is altogether wanting in the scheme which I am now discussing. Under a sound system, each Army Corps being identical, the commanding officer of each is placed in competition with his neighbour, and the nation is enabled without difficulty to judge who is the most skilful officer and the most able administrator. The extent to which both efficiency and economy would be encouraged by such a plan must be obvious to you all. For myself I protest against our War Department being permitted to publish a burlesque like this in the name of the British Nation. I fear it must have already furnished food for mirth and laughter in the office of the military staff at Berlin. It is calculated to excite and encourage a feeling of contempt for the British name. It exposes our weakness to foreign nations in a reckless and scandalous manner. Altogether it is a most discreditable production. Even if the Government were to withdraw this wretched scheme

to-morrow, the mischief they have already done is so great as to merit the unanimous condemnation of the country. It is surprising how the public have already been so far misled with regard to the value of this so-called Mobilisation scheme. Even the leading journal itself has been misguided enough to publish several leading articles in favour of it. On December 9 the 'Times' says 'The public will of late have experienced something of the pleasure of a new sensation in reading from day to day of the progress of our military administration.' Well I think at all events I have made it clear to you, that the country will witness a military progress of a very extraordinary character indeed should the Horse Guards ever venture to put into practical operation this scheme which they have elaborated with so much care upon paper.

Now I have asserted that our authorities were perplexed as to the manner in which the superfluous officers which we have were to be disposed of. They have, I admit, shown a marvellous ingenuity in doing this. While the number of men available for their scheme, including every militiaman in the country, is barely sufficient to furnish material for four German Army Corps, they have at once created eight. They fill up the vacancies among the men by creating a fictitious army of militiamen, of men in buckram, who have no real existence. Then again in place of having two divisions in an Army Corps as they have in Germany, our authorities have created three. The object

of this manipulation is very clear; they could not otherwise find employment for the unnecessary staff of officers we maintain. It has been urged by way of excuse for the creation of this third division that our Horse Guards have shown that they are ahead of Berlin, that the experience of the late war established the fact that three divisions in an Army Corps were more convenient than two. The 'Times' has discussed this point with some degree of care; and asserts that the German Army Corps would have been better divided into three divisions. A German Army Corps consists roundly of 56,000 men; the commanding officer of each division has therefore about 28,000 men under his care.

The 'Times' would appear then to be of opinion that from 18,000 to 19,000 men for a division is the best number.

Suppose we accept this opinion, I have to remind you that under the scheme proposed by the War Office our Army Corps are to consist of 36,000 not 56,000 men, and if divided into two would just give to each General in command about the same number of men as was suggested in order to make the German organisation perfect. But such an arrangement would have failed of course to meet the difficulty, a vast number of officers would have been left out in the cold and without any work to do. How ridiculous it is to have five of our Army Corps divided into three when each General will only have 2,012 regular soldiers to com-

mand in time of peace, and some 10,000 militiamen in the event of our shores being invaded.

I have dealt at some length with this point because I consider that over-officering is one of the greatest dangers that exists in our military system. I would also impress upon you the great importance of insisting upon having as few Army Corps established as are really necessary. My opinion is that five Army Corps are amply sufficient for all our wants. The establishment of every one additional beyond this means a most unnecessary and a most grievous waste of public money.

Will you pardon my pointing to this diagram,[1] which shows in a simple form how an Army Corps can be organised in this country. You are as capable of judging of its constitution and of its efficiency as any General in Europe. Military affairs now are necessarily regulated upon principles so simple that even a schoolboy can understand them.

In order that business men may easily and clearly understand what an Army Corps is, I have prepared a diagram showing the composition of an Army Corps with its two Divisions. A Division is the usual conventional word taken to mean a force of men in which the four arms—Infantry, Cavalry, Artillery, and Engineers—are all represented.

By this diagram, business men will see how little mystery there is in understanding the condition of any

[1] See Diagram in Appendix.

army founded upon sound organisation; let a man understand one Army Corps and he understands readily everything else, and would be in a position to judge of the condition and cost of our Army more easily than he can understand that of almost any other of our institutions.

The Lieut.-General at the head of the Army Corps is responsible for everything of every kind; the Major-General of each Division are his right and left hands, each being responsible for his Division; they each looking to their three Brigadiers, who are responsible for the Infantry and Cavalry, and two officers of his staff, viz., the Lieut.-Colonel of Artillery and of Engineers, who are responsible for their respective Arms; and so, from the Lieut.-General down to the drummer-boy, all are connected, and the responsibility of each officer is clearly and well defined.

It will be seen also that an Army Corps system requires a certain proportion of each Arm, so that enlistment should be for as nearly as possible the same term of years, so as to maintain a regular flow of men into each Arm from the outside, and a regular flow from it to Furlough or Reserve.

An Army Corps is, to a well-organised military force, exactly what a department is to a large wholesale business house. An efficient and well-paid man is put at the head of it, with ample power and authority, and he is expected to show good results.

Clear and well-defined authority and responsibility

are the main springs of the Prussian system of administration. Every Captain is as anxious about the efficiency of his company as the General is about that of his Army Corps. The eye of the superior Commanding Officer is over all, for his own credit and reputation is dependent upon the good work done by all under him.

Nearly every man in these Army Corps is known to each other, and each arm of the Service is accustomed to work in harmony with the other. They are ready to take the field on a few days' warning, equipped, perfect, and ready for action on the shortest notice possible.

As each Army Corps manages its own affairs, very little is left for the War Department to do but to maintain a general supervision and control.

CHAPTER XIV.[1]

Our Military Difficulty—Scheme for Reorganising the British Army: Paper read at Brighton.

It is a wholesome sign of the times that this Association should consider the question of our military service. That the subject is closely bound up with the well-being of the nation, and intimately connected both with our national industry and expenditure, is beyond doubt. The Association, therefore, judging wisely, has placed the discussion of the question under the economy and trade department.

For some years I have taken the deepest interest in the subject, and devoted my mind to its consideration, and I own that I am perfectly lost in astonishment when I see that such an extravagant, inefficient, immoral system, entailing, too, such a wanton waste of human life, has been permitted so long to exist amongst us in this country.

The plain truth is that the community at large know next to nothing, and think less, of how our Army is got together, or of how it is maintained.

[1] The following paper was read at the Social Science Congress at Brighton in the autumn of 1875.

The result is that, constituencies taking little or no interest in the question, members of Parliament and statesmen generally fold their arms and shut their eyes, and leave the War Office to go on pretty much as it likes. A French writer has very truly said that 'a nation cannot easily be led beyond what it knows or thinks.'

If England only knew the utter unsoundness of her present military system, with all its attendant immorality, waste of human life, inefficiency, and extravagance, and only knew how easily it could be replaced by a wholesome and sound system, and with a saving of several millions a year, the whole nation would with one loud voice, from one end of the kingdom to the other, protest, and never cease protesting, until our present system was purified and changed.

That such a change can be brought about without either great difficulty or delay I have asserted for years, and now without hesitation I repeat the assertion. But we must be prepared to give up an antiquated system mainly resting upon exploded and erroneous ideas—ideas which might befit the seventeenth or eighteenth centuries, but which are entirely out of harmony with our own; and we must not let the question be entangled with class interests or political results, or used as a shuttlecock between parties in the State who chiefly, considering what interests they may conciliate, too often adopt mere makeshift expedients to satisfy political exigencies, and do not, on the con-

trary, grapple boldly with the evil. It is that spirit that has produced the utter failure and costliness of past schemes.

The great results obtained by Continental nations at a comparatively small cost in money or the withdrawal of their sons from home life, and the trifling results obtained by us at an enormous cost of money and waste of time of our people, are, in spite of the dust which has been thrown in their eyes, beginning to cause people to see that such results are not due to conscription, but are mainly due to sound administration and good organisation.

I wish it to be clearly understood that I am not one of those who would seek to emulate Continental nations in having a vast military force. I cannot but regard the murderous conflicts which we have lately seen on the plains of Europe, and which, unhappily, there are indications that we may see repeated at no very distant date upon an enormous scale, as a disgrace to the so-called civilisation of our day and to this the nineteenth century of our Christian era.

But on the other hand, the armed condition of Europe bids us be quite prepared to defend ourselves, not with crowds of raw, untrained lads or men demoralised by long barrack life, but with a force of able-bodied men, who morally, physically, and as regards age, discipline, and organisation, are at least equal to any army of any European Power which might attempt these shores. With the European wars

of 1866 and 1870 fresh before us, to have less would be the height of madness. Such a force and organisation must be prepared in time of peace: the days of hurrying up raw recruits to be drilled while the war rages are gone by. Wars now are hardly declared till they are over, and demand not only that men must be ready to take the field at once, but that their organisation must be the most decentralised and simple possible. Yet, although twenty years have passed away since the Crimean war exhibited to us the abject helplessness of our War Department—lost in the maze of its own centralisation, confusion everywhere, responsibility nowhere—and although nine years have elapsed since what I may call the revolution in European warfare was inaugurated on the plains of Sadowa in 1866, and confirmed at Sedan in 1870, and we as a nation have been in profound peace, beyond organising vice for our celibate Army and spending some millions of money, our defences are not one halfpennyworth better than they were. We could not to-day, from all the crowds of men that we have, muster in these islands 50,000 who could be regarded, either as to age or training, as equal to the soldiers of Prussia.

As yet we have no force that can be regarded as satisfactory, nor is even the first stone of a sound scheme laid. Centralisation, in place of being diminished, is now even greater than in the days of the Crimean war; and our military system can best be described as a 'mighty maze without a plan.'

Whilst Prussia has reduced her system to a science, with clear principles to guide her, we, apparently out of sheer wantonness, waste all the appliances which we have at our hands, and amidst the finest materials and great expenditure possess only a chaos.

The question before us is this—'Is it desirable that the system of short-term military service should be superseded or supplemented by compulsory military service?'

Now I take it that this question, as here put, means—'Are we to give up the so-called short-service system, without a pension, and almost no pay in the reserve, and return to long service, with a pension? Or are we to adopt really short service, combined with a compulsory system of obtaining our recruits?' My answer is that really short service has never been tried, and that voluntary enlistment, properly gone about, would give us more men than we require, and of a better sort than we now or ever have obtained under that system.

But we must be prepared to abandon our antiquated ideas, particularly that antiquated idea which stands directly in the way of a sound military system —namely, that we should recruit for and maintain two perfectly distinct military forces for two perfectly distinct purposes, the one force for offensive purposes, and called our Regular Army, the other for defensive purposes, and called our Militia.

It is not to be supposed that these two armies, paid

for by the same taxpayers, work into each other's hands, and co-operate in harmony for the defence of the nation; far otherwise, for, on the contrary, each of those two armies recruit with as much vigour against each other as if they were enlisting for different nations.

And this ruinous competition is encouraged by the War Office, and paid for by the taxpayers of the nation.

The recruits obtained for the offensive Army are kept in barracks, and drilled, and drilled, and over-drilled, until they are utterly sick of their duties, of their quarters, of their officers, and of the very name of soldier.

While the recruits for the other Army—the defensive Army—receive only just about as much drill and training each year as they can forget by the time they are called out for training the following year, and their instruction is chiefly given by mere amateurs, three-fourths of whom never were in the Army.

The one Army—the offensive Army—the authorities, with the greatest coolness possible, inform the unwitting public would be none the worse for even a little more drill! Whilst in the very same breath they, without a blush, speak of 'that valuable old constitutional force, the Militia,' as being quite reliable as a defensive force—that is, to be perfectly trusted to drive from our shores any of the carefully and

continuously trained European forces which might venture to invade us.

The plain truth is, we play at soldiers in this country, and a costly game it is, and one to which no other nation in Europe would submit, or does submit but ourselves, and only because almost no one from the outside examines and understands the game.

Here we are with the greatest and most costly fleet which the world ever saw, with a citizen army of volunteers, who, morally and physically at least, can scarcely be surpassed by other 170,000 men in Europe, maintaining within these islands other two perfectly distinct armies—the one the Regular Army, consisting roundly of 100,000 men, for offensive purposes, and who are drilled for from six to ten or more years; the other the Militia, consisting roundly of 100,000 men, for defensive purposes, and who are drilled for something like four to six weeks a year.

Most rational people—and all Europe except our red-tape selves do—would think it more in harmony with common sense if all the 200,000 men, composing our two Armies, had each passed through the same Army, and received two years' careful and continuous drill and training by the same officers, all knowing the same system and equally capable of encountering an enemy within or without the shores of these islands; and were, after such two years' temporary absence, sent home, with some mutually advantageous arrangement, that for a certain term of years they were to be

ready at any moment, in the event of war, to come out for the defence of their home and country.

When I see the military authorities of this country upholding, in the full blaze of the European military experience of the past nine years, the antiquated and childish idea that we must have in England, besides our fleet and volunteers, two distinct Armies, one for offensive and the other for defensive purposes, I can only compare them and their notions to the ludicrous story told of a professor in one of our Universities. He had a favourite cat, for the ingress and egress of which he had a hole cut at the bottom of the door of his room. When, by-and-by, she had some kittens the learned professor insisted upon cutting a small hole beside the larger one specially for them to go out and in by.

Ordinary mortals thought that the large hole would have done for both, and they were right and the philosopher wrong; and if the people of England will insist that their paid defenders must be as able to fight against an enemy on the shores of Kent or Sussex as against an enemy in Mecklenburg or Normandy, they will be equally right.

The maintenance of the militia has been for a long course of time most detrimental to the interests and safety of the nation. We must not blame the men who compose the militia; they have innocently enough believed that they were doing their country service, but it is impossible not to blame the authorities. They

knew or ought to have known, for they have abundance of material to judge from, that the maintenance of such a force was and is worse than a costly sham; it was and is a sham directly weakening the defence of the country, which those very authorities are bound to see to, for it is to their care that the defence of the nation is intrusted.

The truth is that each successive Government in this country have adopted a hand-to-mouth policy with our Army, and, in abject fear of county opposition—for the militia is mainly maintained for the amusement of country gentlemen—have continued to uphold it, rather than run the risk of imperilling their power by boldly encountering that opposition and declaring that the sham must end.

That there are in both Houses of Parliament about 190 members who are, or who have been, connected with the militia and yeomanry, should surely not be a reason for the continuance of the sham, but, on the contrary, should be a guarantee for its early disappearance.

The first Government that in this country declares that one Army in these islands is enough, but that that Army must be capable of fighting with any men, anywhere, would deserve the thanks of the country. In truth, we are not without evidence that the maintenance of the idea of a local and separate Army for purely defensive purposes is impracticable, for every now and then the authorities, under the pressure of

circumstances, have been forced by their action to acknowledge that it is untenable; and it has during the past twenty years been subjected to some very rude shocks.

In 1855 the idea of a local *versus* an Imperial army received its first shock. The business connected with the militia was transferred from the Home Department to the War Department. In 1867 again the separate idea gave way, for a number of militiamen were, by the payment of a retaining fee of 1*l.* a year, engaged in case of war to go with the Regular Army—although, by their training, they were and are utterly unfit to be sent against trained troops.

Again in 1871–2 the militia force was brought more directly under the War Office, and less under the control of Lords-Lieutenant of counties.

Each of those occasions are memorable—the first just after the Crimean War; the second after Sadowa, in 1866; the third after Sedan, in 1870.

Our militia force, as at present constituted, is a mere remnant of an old and exploded feudal system by which the peasantry of a county came out under the leadership of the country gentlemen for home defence, and if they volunteered at the beginning of the century, as they did, to fight in our Continental wars, they were generally pretty much as to training, &c., equal to the enemy; although even then they were evidently a mistake, for the Duke of Wellington has left us on record his opinion, given at a time when it was worth

having—namely, when, in September 1813, Lord Castlereagh proposed to send *him* some militia volunteers to the Peninsula, he wrote most emphatically that he did not think them the force he could rely upon:—'I never,' he wrote, 'had under my command more than one regiment of English militia. I found that, however, to be so entirely divested of interior economy and real discipline and subordination, that, however well the soldiers may be disciplined as far as regards their drill and movements, I should very much doubt that a large militia army would be very useful in the field for more than a momentary exertion. To enter upon a war with infantry regiments so composed would be a risk not hitherto incurred, or incident to the old system.' If after this even a faint notion of their being of any use out of the country remained, the events of 1866 and 1870 have utterly, completely, and for ever shattered them. In 1813 the discipline and training of our militia was such as to make the Duke of Wellington reject their services. The mass of them to-day are mere raw lads, utterly incapable of facing any of the well-trained troops of Europe. To send out our raw, untrained, undisciplined militia to meet the highly-trained, well-disciplined troops of Europe, would not only be madness—it would be direct murder.

The militia are not only useless themselves, but are, directly and indirectly, the great main hindrance to our having a splendid army and at a reasonable cost.

Beyond any doubt, if we had recruiting only for the Regular Army, with somewhat increased attractions, the great mass of the men who now join the militia would join the Army. That this is manifest I will make quite clear by plain facts that cannot be gainsaid:—

1st. From 1805 to 1813, both inclusive, 110,098 militiamen volunteered into the Army.

2nd. In March 1855, when 61,764 militiamen were called out for training, 19,450 of them volunteered, within a month, to go to the Crimea with the Regular Army.

3rd. 71,182 militiamen joined the Army during the Crimean war.

4th. The Duke of Cambridge stated, on June 8, 1866, before Commissioners appointed to inquire into the question of recruiting, that 'the moment that you recruit for the militia as you do for the Line there is no doubt that the militia interferes to a great extent with the Army because I believe that many a man who now enlists for the militia would go into the Army; and there are such difficulties in the way of any militia soldier coming into the Army, even if he wishes it, that we do not get these men.'

5th. Report of the Inspector-General of Recruiting, Jan. 10, 1871, stated that recruiting for the Regular Army was very seriously affected by recruiting for the militia.

6th. The only streak of something like light which I have seen in the dark and dreary history of recruiting

for our military forces, given by Mr. Clode in his valuable work, 'The Military Forces of the Crown,' occurred in 1807 under Mr. Wyndham's Act, when recruiting for the militia ceased; the term of enlistment was shortened, and higher attractions in the Regular Army were offered. The result (drawn from another source), I find, was that during the only six months that it was in operation 10,418 recruits joined the Army, or more than had joined directly during any one of the whole of the preceding three years, and within thirteen men of any of the preceding six months, including volunteers from the militia.

And whenever we again adopt the plan of recruiting for one Army only, and offer the terms suitable to our own time, we shall get all the men we want.

We must give up our great militia trap, which seems set for the purpose of catching any men who may be militarily inclined, and keeping them from becoming trained soldiers, unless they, after getting all they can in the militia, desert and join the Army, and perhaps desert again.

This double-army system has to-day given us this remarkable result—that these islands literally swarm with deserters from both forces. During the last five years over 72,000 deserters have been advertised for by our two armies. During the same five years each of our two armies have been valiantly fighting against each other for recruits; the Regular Army getting over 100,000 men and the militia 150,000 men, or a

quarter of a million of men drawn from the labouring classes, when, by a sound system, less than two-thirds of the number, if picked and passed through one army, would have given us a good and trustworthy force of trained men.

I should add that, during the same five years, something like 220,000 fresh men joined our volunteers. To talk of conscription to get men for our modern requirements, in the face of such facts, is quite absurd.

There is no people in the world more brave, or more willing to serve voluntarily, than the mass of our fellow-countrymen; they only need to be fairly paid: the duty of serving their country in the Army only requires to be recognised as honourable and so arranged as not to entail withdrawal too long from home in time of peace, and we would attract three men for every one we want.

Here I should say something upon

CONSCRIPTION.

Conscription for the Regular Army cannot be said ever to have had an existence in this country, and it is impossible to read the history of those efforts which have been made to introduce it, either directly or indirectly, without being satisfied that any new effort to force it upon the country would be resisted by the united judgment and intelligence of the nation.

Since the reign of Queen Anne Parliament has from time to time enforced compulsory service upon

minals, vagrants, and persons without a lawful occupation. The dishonour and discredit thus thrown upon our Army survives to this day, but the desirability of doing something to remove it never appears to enter the minds of our authorities.

BALLOTING FOR THE MILITIA

is the modified form of compulsory military service which has been resorted to in this country. It was regarded as an indirect means of recruiting the Army. Men, after being enrolled in the Militia, were induced by high bounties to join the Line.

But an impartial consideration of the occasional experience we have had of this mode of raising men conclusively shows that it is, perhaps, the most clumsy, imperfect, and expensive system that could possibly be devised. One of the conditions which accompanied it was that substitutes might be provided, and the extent to which the people availed themselves of this mode of escape from military service may be judged of by the fact that in 1803, out of 45,492 men raised by ballot, 40,098 were substitutes; in 1807–8, out of 26,085 men raised, 22,956 were substitutes; in 1810, out of 8,498 men selected by ballot, only 397 served.

The system, in short, practically became one for selecting recruiting agents, not soldiers by ballot; and the waste of money involved by this roundabout process was enormous. The competition for substitutes between individuals selected to serve who had no wish

to do so, raised the price not only against themselves, but also against the regular recruiting agents for the Line. In 1803 the bounty paid to the Army Reserve men alone amounted to 1,145,949*l.*, while the cost of 24,691 men who had been coaxed out of that force by the regulars cost the Imperial funds no less than 188,268*l.*

These facts conclusively condemn the system of recruiting through a militia raised by the ballot. Yet no thinking man can look with satisfaction on the system now in operation, and on the scenes which take place daily in the taverns and public-houses frequented by the recruiting sergeant, without feeling utterly ashamed of the manner in which our much-vaunted British Army is brought together. Such a system and such scenes reflect disgrace upon us as a nation.

Who can hesitate to believe that if we were to adopt the simple and straightforward plan of offering to a recruit the fair market value of his labour, we should obtain an abundant supply of men possessing the qualities we desire? We pay our private soldiers less now than the average weekly wage of an agricultural labourer. Were we but to resolve upon offering this wage, under a simple and easily-understood contract, which would admit of the men, as soon as they had become trained soldiers, to pass into a Reserve Force, in which, while obtaining a liberal retaining fee, they would be at liberty to follow their ordinary civil avocation, we should very soon have a different class of men

in our service than the cheap bargains now supplied to us by the recruiting sergeant. The War Department, under such a system, would come to be regarded as an employer superior to other employers of labour. Their service would become as honourable and as desirable as any other service under the Crown. And look at

THE IMMORALITY OF OUR EXISTING MILITARY SYSTEM.

No other civilised nation, I am satisfied, would tolerate for a single year the existence in its midst of such a barbarous military system as we possess. Our barracks are military monasteries, in which vice is nursed and encouraged in a most shameless manner. Mere boys are brought into companionship with men who have been living in a state of enforced celibacy for a long term of years. How many promising youths have been ruined, how many homes have been made desolate, by the profligacy which such a system directly encourages?

However feeble our military authorities have been in reforming and reorganising our military forces, they have, I regret to say, shown an alacrity in accepting measures calculated to promote and sanction vice in our celibate Army, which is a scandal to us as a Christian people. No better security for the progressive prosperity of the nation could be given than the promotion of the moral and religious welfare of the people; but while the State with one hand seeks to do

this by encouraging education and suppressing crime and vice, with the other, through our military system, it sanctions and encourages the vilest immorality.

No better mode of corrupting a nation could be conceived than that which our military authorities now practise by keeping a large number of young men for a long term of years living an idle and a vicious life. We see the result in that abominable organisation which has grown up among us during the past ten years under the fostering protection of the Contagious Diseases Acts. The epitaph written on the tomb of every nation that has passed away has been that it perished because it became corrupt.

The influence of a barrack life even upon the small percentage of privates who are permitted to marry is also pernicious, while the women and children become an impediment in moving troops about, which is unknown in a sound modern system.

Again, clandestine marriages among soldiers frequently take place, despite the stringency of our regulations against them, and when this is the case very frequently the wives and children become a burden upon the parish authorities. By a return, published by the Local Government Board, it was shown that in 1873 739 wives and 1,428 children of soldiers were in receipt of parish relief.

All this, it must be acknowledged, is most degrading, and it cannot fail to keep honest and respectable young men from regarding our Army as attractive.

Moreover, the amount of sickness and the mortality among the troops is directly encouraged by our vicious system. Some thousands of men (in 1872, 3,628) are constantly in hospital, and beyond a doubt the death of about eight hundred men annually may be traced to the same cause.

In Prussia they have long recognised the fact that, whether they obtain their men by conscription or as volunteers, their stay in barracks should be made as short as possible. A young man, once thoroughly and fully trained and disciplined as a soldier, is at any time ready for his place in the ranks. The object of the Prussian military authorities has long been to do this in as brief a time as possible, and this problem they have so satisfactorily solved that they do not now keep men in the barracks or training school for more than twenty or twenty-two months on an average.

During this time he is hard at work, but as soon as his term of training is over he is free to marry and settle in life. Such a system encourages industry, discipline, and morality, and presents in these respects a very marked contrast to our own.

The German authorities have long ago discovered that it is both cheaper for them as a nation, and better for the men individually, that they should live as much as possible at home, maintaining themselves by their own industry, rather than in huge dreary barracks at an enormous cost to the State.

This is a question in which the women of England are deeply and directly interested. It is not just to the women of England that we should maintain a system which prevents a large proportion of young men from marrying. In Great Britain there is an excess of women over men between the ages of twenty and thirty of not less than 320,732, or something like a third of a million of women chiefly belonging to the poorer classes. In the face of such a fact, for us to keep 100,000 men in a state of enforced celibacy is both a blunder and a crime, and there is no excuse whatever for our so acting except the indifference and apathy of the nation. The cure is simple and easy, and could be speedily applied if the nation demanded it.

I have prepared three diagrams in order that I may convey this to you more clearly, and show that Prussia does not depend upon her mode of obtaining men—conscription—for her great results. On the contrary, I think Prussia is at a great disadvantage in this respect compared with ourselves, who require comparatively few men, readily obtainable by a properly paid voluntary system. The great difference between Prussia and ourselves will be found in the use we each make of recruits after we get them, and the perfect simplicity of her organisation. No doubt it must be borne in mind that the Prussian organisation, which is as near perfection as the human mind can well devise, has been the outcome of much thought

and labour extending over nearly seventy years; but it is on that account the more worthy of our admiration and adoption.

The first diagram [1] shows broadly the Prussian system; the second, our own system as it is; the third, our own modelled after the Prussian system.

The first diagram will be readily understood when I say that the leading principle of the Prussian system is decentralisation. Her army is divided into separate little armies, each with a General at its head, invested with great power and corresponding responsibility. In 1870 the Prussian army consisted of thirteen such Army Corps, giving a war strength of over 940,000 men between twenty and thirty-two years of age, 203,000 horses, and 1,400 field guns. To maintain this force an annual inflow of 100,000 men was required, as will be seen by the diagram, or about one in three of the population who attained military age each year, which, divided amongst the thirteen Army Corps, give each 7,750 men, who, after being in barracks twenty or twenty-two months—not three years as is generally supposed—and made thorough soldiers, are sent home on furlough, ready to be called out in case of war. Each General of an Army Corps has thus a small army of over 72,000 men, 15,000 horses, and 100 guns under his care, and the cost of such an army is not more than 865,000*l.*, a result at which surely the people of this country may well open their eyes. Of course

[1] See Appendix.

each General vies with another to show good results, both as to cost and efficiency; efficiency being thoroughly tested by autumn manœuvres, and cost shown by the amount each Army Corps receives. It is to the interest of the general not to keep a man a day longer in barracks than he can help, and officers are not employed for show, or more of them than is required. The cost of this army in 1870 was 10,140,000*l.* Since 1870 five and a half Army Corps have been added (and the Landstrum organised). The number of men already added amounts to 209,000, which, with a corresponding number of horses and field guns, at a total cost of 16,000,000*l.*, and in a few years the whole army will number nearly 1,340,000 trained men. I would particularly draw attention to the fact that since 1870, with 42,400 recruits annually, they by their system might have obtained already an additional army of 209,000 soldiers, between twenty and twenty-six years of age; and in six years more this army will number nearly 400,000, at a cost of something like 5,000,000*l.*

The War Minister at Berlin can now, in a few days, rely upon having an army in the field of any size he likes, from 20,000 men up to much over a million of men, by merely telegraphing to the General at the head of each Army Corps.

Moreover, as all detail is carried out by each Army Corps, the central administration is simple and inexpensive, and in place of crowds of clerks, and the helpless and hopeless undignified confusion of

our own large War Office, there is a calm continually reigning at the small War Office of Berlin, which permits the Minister thoughtfully and carefully even further to improve the administration of their wonderful system.

Now look at the second diagram,[1] showing our army as it is—an unorganised mass. Taking our total forces—Home, Colonial, and Indian—costing over 30,000,000*l.*, apart from a cheaply-paid native force of 122,000, and our untrained militia of 104,600, the total number of British soldiers is 188,000, out of which 64,600 are either too young or too old, thus leaving only 123,500 men of the age and training that Prussia would accept from any of her Generals, and to obtain which army, apart from natives in India, over 50,000 recruits were required. Or look at our Home and Colonial Army, numbering with militia and yeomanry 242,600, of which only 78,500 are of right age and trained, with horses scarcely equal to one Prussian Army Corps, and only 339 field guns, the outcome of over 45,000 recruits, and fourteen or fifteen millions a year, a less outcome than Prussia gets in three and a half Army Corps requiring only 26,000 recruits and three millions sterling annually.

The third diagram[2] shows our own Army organised under the Prussian system. All recruits would be enlisted for seven years, those for Indian and Colonial service remaining the whole seven years with the

[1] See Appendix. [2] See Appendix.

colours, receiving at the end their discharge and a sum of money in lieu of pension. Those for home service in peace,—and anywhere in war—to remain in barracks not longer than is necessary to make them thorough soldiers, which I put here as about two years (thus reducing the number of men in barracks by about 50,000, compared with the number we now have), then passing into the reserve B, and receiving pay at the rate of 20*l.* a year at least; for a reserve force is only valuable if it can be depended upon when wanted, and I regard high pay in the reserve as the keystone of the system which I venture to advocate. By retaining in hand most of this sum till the last year we should have a guarantee for the appearance of our reserve men when wanted. I have by this diagram shown the number of trained men at home, after seven years, between 27 and 32. These I do not think we need bind to our service by any agreement; for in case of war I have no doubt that, by an offer of money, we would secure the service of all we should want for home defence without difficulty. When we recollect that in August 1870, we voted 2,000,000*l.* for 20,000 men, the force of this can well be understood. By this it will be seen that, with only 32,600 picked recruits, taken from men of 20, we can provide India and our colonies with all they want, and younger and better men than at present, and have a force at home of over 220,000 trained men between 20 and 32; and, as most of the men we now have might be draughted into the

reserve and civil life, I calculate, if our home army were divided at once into five Army Corps, with five of our best Generals, one at the head of each (and we have some splendid officers), with great power given to each of them, they might place our forces upon a respectable footing in three years and save millions to the nation.

The main causes of our wasteful expenditure are obvious.

1st. The maintenance of two competing armies:—

Direct cost of Militia and Yeomanry	£1,350,000
Indirect cost to regular army, making recruiting costly, promoting desertion and consequent imprisonments, causing us to take boys and keep them until they grow men, causing us to take men without character, I estimate at, say	400,000
Keeping men too long, and paying pensions for long service	1,030,000
Keeping 50,000 more men in barracks than we ought to keep, at 37*l.* each	1,850,000
Saving in hospitals, &c.	250,000
Reduction in number of officers (we have 7,000 now for home and colonial army, or 2,000 more than we need, and chiefly in the higher ranks)	500,000
Saving by work of War Office being reduced by work being done by each army corps	100,000
	£5,480,000

Besides this, I leave out of sight altogether the great saving that might be looked for from wholesome competition between the Generals at the head of each Army Corps.

There falls to be deducted from this—

Pay to 100,000 men in the Reserve B of 20*l.* a year, chiefly deferred till end of his seventh year . .		£2,000,000
Increased pay—to bring up pay of all privates to 16*s.* a week		157,300
Increased pay—non-commissioned officers . . .		16,250
Colonies pay at end of seventh year in lieu of pension .		90,000
		£2,263,550
Direct saving		£3,216,450
50,000 men at home, earning 15*s.* a week .	£1,950,000	
100,000 militia, 15*s.* (six weeks) . .	450,000	
Indirect saving		2,400,000
Direct and indirect saving		£5,616,450

I am aware that it will be urged by many military authorities that however suitable such a scheme of service as I have suggested may be for a nation like Germany, it is altogether inappropriate to ourselves, because so large a proportion of our men are required to serve abroad in India and our Colonies. This I regard as a very superficial fallacy.

The truth is, that our combined home and foreign military service is especially suited to the voluntary system of service. It enables us to give our recruits a choice, and in this respect we can admirably suit the varied tastes of our countrymen.

No doubt the short period of service which I suggest with the colours at home would be unsuitable for India. But there is no difficulty whatever in arranging for a suitable term for India, and yet maintaining harmony and direct connection with the home and Indian armies.

Were such a choice offered, I am satisfied we should have no difficulty whatever in obtaining an ample supply of suitable recruits for our foreign service. It is acknowledged that our Indian service, even as it is, has always been popular; but a grave responsibility unquestionably rests on us as a nation for our reckless disregard of the consequences of sending men to India at such ages when their constitution is ill qualified to resist climatic influences. We send men abroad in our military service of all ages, although the evidence of our medical men establishes the fact that when our troops in India reach the age of thirty and upwards the mortality among them becomes very great. In like manner we retain many men in India far beyond the term which the best medical authorities agree in considering to be safe.

The cruelty of such a system is as obvious as it is extravagant.

In order to understand the composition of our Army in India in respect to age, I moved for a return, and found that on September 1, 1873, out of 59,000 men there were only 35,000 between the ages of 20 and 30; 22,500 were over 30. This is what an eminent military authority—Sir Lintorn Simmonds—has to say by way of comment upon these figures:—'If the men in India had all been between the age of 20 and 30 throughout the year, instead of being as they were on that day, there would have been 380 fewer deaths, 840 fewer men in hospital, 592 fewer men sent home as invalids, and of course 592 fewer

recruits to send out to replace them. We should have had a battalion of 840 more men effective out of our small Army of 60,000.'

The saving to India, Sir Lintorn Simmonds adds, would, without calculating recruiting or depôt expenses, have amounted to 230,000*l.* a year.

I might here dwell also at some length upon the demoralising influence of a protracted residence in India upon European soldiers, and upon the effect which long contact with inferior Eastern races produces upon them. The official sanction given to the immorality of our troops in India I cannot but regard as a grave national scandal. I dare not venture here to quote in detail the evidence which has been placed on record upon this point; but should any doubt be entertained about it the statements made by Dr. Ross before a Royal Commission in 1871 can be readily referred to (and I do hope that many will refer to them), because, in my opinion, they disclose a state of things which reflects much disgrace upon our system.

Many people, I am aware, fondly imagine that our soldiers return from India seasoned by enterprise and experience. Seasoned they are, unquestionably, but it is in habits and practices that do not improve them for home service. This is what military men themselves say upon this point: 'Regiments returning from India are quite unfit for the hard work of a campaign in Europe. The soldier has been so long accustomed to an easy life: native servants to attend

him, everything carried for him on a march, quite unfitting him for active service at home.'

I would only add to this, that I understand that when soldiers do return from India to join our own Army they are simply at once put to do the heavy work without any consideration of the special conditions under which they have been placed, and to which I have just referred.

I repeat that the power which we possess of offering to men who have a taste for a military life a choice between home and foreign service, so far from proving a difficulty, would positively be an aid in organising our military forces under the scheme which I venture to suggest.

It should also be borne in mind that our military position in India has greatly changed since the Mutiny. Prior to this event, the proportion of native to British troops was very much larger than it is now. In 1856-7 we had something like 268,000 natives to 42,000 Europeans. Now we have 120,000 native troops and 60,000 Europeans.

Again, the opening of the Suez Canal and the establishment of direct telegraphic communication between Great Britain and India are obviously important additional elements of strength.

In the opinion of Lord Lawrence, and I could quote no higher authority I think, our requirements are fairly provided for as to numbers. When examined before the Select Committee on East India

Finance, Lord Lawrence said:—'Of course India must look for help to England in desperate circumstances, such as an invasion of India. But I do not myself think there would be an insurrection if you kept 60,000 English soldiers well officered in India. I do not think a dog would bark against us, let alone an insurrection take place; but, if such a thing did occur, I think it would be put down before it spread.'

Now, the force which we have could, in case of invasion, be quickly brought up to a point far beyond the highest number we ever had in India during the Mutiny.

Our colonial forces are now nearly all on the way to or enclustered around India.

In 1875, out of 23,910 men of our colonial army, over 10,000 were at Malta and Gibraltar, and nearly 7,000 of the rest at Ceylon, China, Straits Settlements, Mauritius, and the Cape, between which places, considering our large Navy, exchange of troops with India, judiciously made, might make service in India of no longer period for each soldier than four or five years. And as, according to Lord Lawrence, it is only in case of invasion that we should need one man more than 60,000—the present number—in such case we should have considerable warning. A man must be little acquainted either with the history of his country or the pluck of his fellow-countrymen who entertains a doubt of the number who would, independently of their agreement to go out in case of war, volunteer

to go to India from our Home Army; and moreover, in such a case, we might depend upon drawing considerably from the natives of India.

In March, 1871, the Secretary of State for India wrote thus to the Governor-General of India:—

'It must never be forgotten that the great mutiny of 1857 was suppressed with the aid of native levies; the gallantry and fidelity of the troops so raised were indeed conspicuous. It cannot be said, therefore, that any doubt was cast by the events of that year upon the power of the British Government to yoke the native race of India to its military service.'

As to organising our Army, we should maintain one Army, yet with perfect harmony and united action between forces at home and abroad; for, as regards exchange of officers and recruiting to meet the requirements of both, these are matters so simple that I need not enter upon them.

I know several officers who could carry this out at once. In truth, we have many talented officers in our Army at the present moment, but our system is such that we do not make the best use of them, any more than of the recruits we obtain.

I have finished, and beg to thank this assembly for the courtesy which they have been pleased to extend to me during the reading of a paper which, owing to the nature of the subject, I have been unable more thoroughly to condense.

It is to be hoped that the discussion will be en-

tered upon in a broad and purely national spirit, and that the outcome of this meeting will be to hasten the solution of one of the most pressing and urgent problems which this country has had in hand for more than a generation.

In the discussion which followed the reading of the above paper observations were made by Sir Walter Crofton, Mr. Edwin Chadwick, C.B., Mr. David Chadwick, M.P., Mr. Sheldon Amos, and several other gentlemen. Mr. Holms, in his reply, said that he could not, without trespassing too much upon their patience, answer each member who had spoken, or comment upon all the suggestions which they had been good enough to make. But there were certain leading points to which he felt it desirable that he should shortly refer. One was the reference made by Sir Walter Crofton and Mr. Edwin Chadwick to the minimum age at which recruits should be taken. Both those gentlemen were of opinion that twenty years was too high a minimum, and that recruits might safely be taken as young as seventeen. His answer to this was that, so far as regards India and foreign service, Parliament had already decided this question by fixing twenty as the minimum age at which they should be accepted. Then, by the system which he had ventured to suggest of dividing our army into separate Army Corps and leaving the full control in the hands of the General at the head of each, it would clearly be the business of each of these responsible commanding

officers to take recruits at the age they might think best. If, indeed, they thought it wise to take mere babies of seventeen months old, that was their affair. But then the nation would look to see which General gave the best value for the money he expended. As regards taking boys from reformatories or industrial schools, he could not conceive why we should for a moment deem it necessary to direct the special attention of such boys to our army any more than to any other calling. It was to this mistaken idea of regarding the army as something so entirely different from all other occupations that we could in a great measure trace the difficulties in which we found ourselves. One of the essential features of his scheme was that we should altogether get rid of the notion that soldiering should be made the sole occupation of a man's life. The army should be made so attractive to the men for the short time that we require them to manufacture them into efficient soldiers, that they would flock most willingly and readily into the ranks. One other point suggested in the discussion was that conscription would be valuable to the nation as drawing men into a school for drill and discipline which the whole male population should be required to pass through. His answer to this argument was that every one would not like such a school, and that we really require no such force. He was convinced that a brief experience of a well-devised scheme of short service, accompanied with good pay, would attract a much larger number of good

recruits than we really require; and, the system being a flexible one, it followed that if the attractions to enlist should become too great owing to the popularity of this school of drill, we might at any time be able to adjust matters by lowering the scale of pay. It had been hinted that he had lauded the Prussian system somewhat too highly; but while he admired and praised their organisation and system of administration as being as near perfection as possible, and while he was satisfied that if any nation desired to have a good army it must closely follow the Prussian model in these respects, he yet thought he had made it clear that recruiting by conscription and the German practice of maintaining a vast military force were altogether and entirely unnecessary here. He certainly had said nothing which would lead anyone to suppose that he desired to see the Prussian model copied in these respects. He strongly deprecated the idea of a military system being established in this country which, as in Prussia, would appear to overshadow all other institutions, greatly to the detriment of the freedom and independence of the people. In closing these final observations, Mr. Holms expressed his great gratification at seeing this question so earnestly appreciated there. The evils and immorality which at present attended our existing military system were subjects that well merited the careful consideration of all who took an interest in the social progress of the people. But he could not disguise from himself or from the

meeting that ignorance on the one hand and self-interest on the other were in this, as in all cases where a reform of existing abuses is in question, the great barriers to be overcome; and that they could only be overcome by displacing that ignorance with a true knowledge of the facts as they exist, when self-interest must give way to sound popular opinion. The chief work now was to get the working classes of this country to understand this subject, and it was for them to say whether the terms he had suggested were acceptable and satisfactory. This being accomplished, the constituencies throughout the country would then demand that their representatives should turn their attention without delay to this most important question.

The resolution moved by Mr. E. Chadwick, for the appointment of a committee to consider the whole question, having been seconded by Mr. Frederick Hill, was unanimously adopted. Mr. David Chadwick expressed a desire that the essay of Mr. Holms should be printed and published at full length. We have thought it likely to prove acceptable to many readers of this Journal.

From the Illustrated London News.

APPENDIX.

I., *p.* 17.

RECRUITING, BY AUTHORITY, ISSUED 20TH FEBRUARY, 1874. THE ADVANTAGES OF THE ARMY TERMS ON WHICH YOUNG MEN ARE INVITED TO JOIN HER MAJESTY'S FORCES—

Conditions of Service.

1. Recruits may be enlisted for long or short service in such proportions as may from time to time be directed by the Adjutant General for—

I. Cavalry	Long service,—*i.e.*, for 12 years' Army service; or, Short service,—*i.e.*, for 8 years' Army service, and 4 years' Reserve service.
II. Artillery . .	Long service,—*i.e.*, for 12 years' Army service; or, Short service,—*i.e.*, for 8 years' Army service, and 4 years' Reserve service.

III.	Engineers	Long service,—*i.e.*, for 12 years' Army service; or, Short service,—*i.e.*, for 8 years' Army service and 4 years' Reserve service.
IV.	Infantry	Long service.—*i.e.*, for 12 years' Army service; or, Short service,—*i.e.*, for 6 years' Army service and 6 years' Reserve service.
V.	Army Service Corps .	Long service,—*i.e.*, for 12 years' Army service; or, Short service,—*i.e.*, for 6 years' Army Service and 6 years' Reserve service.
VI.	Army Hospital Corps .	Long Service,—*i.e.*, for 12 years' Army service.
VII.	Colonial Corps . .	Long Service,—*i.e.*, for 12 years' Army service.

But, within such limits as may from time to time be prescribed, soldiers may on the recommendation of their commanding officers, and with their own free assent, after three years' Army service, pass to the Reserve, and complete in that force the unexpired portion of their engagement.

2. Any soldier on completion of 11 years' Army service, or 9 years in certain cases when ordered for foreign service, may, with the consent of his commanding officer, or other competent military authority, be re-engaged for such period as shall complete 21 years in Her Majesty's Service.

II., *p.* 19.

Introductory Note.

16 Cornwall Gardens, Queen's Gate,
April, 1872.

The present crisis in the military affairs of the country appears to me to be of such grave importance that I have been induced to reprint the remarks which I made on the subject in the House of Commons on the 4th of March.

I am convinced that if the policy which the Government now seeks to have sanctioned was better understood by the country, it would certainly be rejected. The military organisation proposed, so far from putting an end to the recurrence of disastrous panics, will prove a delusion when the day of need arises; and the more thoroughly to establish this system, the House of Commons is about to be asked to sanction a vote of three millions and a-half sterling.

In our military administration there are three points which the country must insist upon being recognised, if we are ever to have efficiency and economy in connection with it.

First—The term of service in the ranks must be shortened to a period of three years (except for India and the Colonies), in order that we may obtain an efficient and reliable Reserve Force.

Second—The number of officers in the Army, especially those of the higher ranks, must be greatly reduced.

Third—The Army must be subdivided into distinct, yet complete, Army Corps, to be located in special districts.

In respect to the first of these points, the present Government distinctly affirmed their entire concurrence in the short-service system in the Sessions of 1870. They themselves proposed that it should be limited to three years. Mr. Cardwell, in a speech which will be found reported in *Hansard*, vol. cci. p. 787, earnestly upheld this principle, and in Committee on the Army Enlistment Bill, he successfully resisted, by a large majority, a motion made by Colonel Barttelot to extend the term to a minimum of five years. Last year, again, when proposing the abolition of the purchase system, the right hon. gentleman recognised, as part of his scheme of military reform, a service of three years with the colours.

In regard to the second point, compared with other European Armies of acknowledged superiority and efficiency, the proportion of officers which Mr. Cardwell seeks to maintain in our Army is much too large, and this is especially the case in the higher ranks.

Upon the adoption of a system of Army Corps depends entirely the simplification of, and economy in, the administration of our Army, the certainty of our having a perfect control system, the proficiency of our officers in their duties, the fixing of a direct responsibility upon every man in the Service, and the clearing away of that tangled labyrinth which now exists, and which hinders the people from understanding that which ought to be most clear and simple.

Measured by this standard, of what value are the propositions made by the Secretary of State for War this Session?

As regards the principle of a short-service system, he has absolutely abandoned it. Instead of passing men more quickly through the ranks into the Reserve and thus really leaving more barrack accommodation, he actually proposes that the House of Commons shall sanction an

expenditure of no less than three millions and a-half, mainly to increase and maintain a force which I unhesitatingly assert is acknowledged to be positively dangerous for us to rely upon for defensive purposes. It is idle to pretend that our Militiamen, with a few months' drill only imposed upon them, could contend successfully with other European forces which undergo a careful and continuous training for three years, and I have never yet been able to see that because the Militia is a force intended only for defence—that is, to drive an enemy from our own shores—an inferior standard of fighting power should suffice. Most people, I believe, would think that in such an extremity we would require the very best of soldiers. It has just been acknowledged by the War Department that it is but experimenting; *but my impression is that it is not in earnest in seeking to create a really powerful and efficient Reserve Force of well-trained men.* If it is, and expects to have such a force in the course of a few years, how are we to characterise the folly of a policy which involves an expenditure of three millions and a-half for Militia barracks; for, unless the Government seriously propose to maintain both a large Reserve Force and a Militia, such additional barrack accommodation is clearly unnecessary. This expenditure would be completed just about the time when the Militia ought to be disappearing.

The proposals of the Government, as now before the country, so far from modifying the second evil influence at work in our military system, really intensifies it.

The number of our officers has been reduced, it is true; but I may state of the 1,239 so reduced there are nearly 700 subalterns, who should have been retained, while the higher ranks remain almost untouched; and this year it is actually proposed to increase the number of lieutenant-colonels and majors. The War Department is acting in direct opposition in respect to the practice now followed in every other branch of the Government service, and which is to

reduce as far as possible the number of highly-paid officials.

The subdivision of the Army into compact and complete Army Corps is altogether ignored, and yet I am thoroughly satisfied that, without the adoption of this system, we can neither have economy, efficiency, nor direct responsibility; nor can we ever hope that the people can clearly comprehend, and thoroughly understand, our system of military administration.

The proposals of the Government conciliate several interests; but such a temporising policy to satisfy the political exigencies of the moment only establishes the necessity for the House of Commons acting with caution, and weighing with care the full meaning of the proposed mischievous expenditure of three millions and a-half of money which it will be immediately called upon to authorise.

JOHN HOLMS.

III., *p.* 27.

Army Medical Department.—From Report, 1872.

On the Influence of Age on the Mortality of Troops serving in the United Kingdom.

The mortality at the different ages, arranged in quinquennial periods, in the several arms of the Service, is shown in the following Table, framed from Abstract No. 3 in the Appendix.

Corps	Annual Ratio of Deaths per 1,000 Living, at the following ages :—					
	Under 20	20 and under 25	25 and under 30	30 and under 35	35 and under 40	40 and upwards
Household Cavalry .	...	5·43	3·13	...	... ...	...
Cavalry of the Line .	2 67	3·98	3·47	9·85	10·47	25·02
Royal Artillery . .	2·22	4·80	6·42	9·84	26·37	40·91
Foot Guards . .	·74	8·06	5·45	10·01	21·07	59·22
Infantry Regiments .	2·84	5·45	4·43	12·32	17·80	22·22
Depôt and Coast Brigade Royal Artillery, and Depôt Battalions . . .	1·61	8·47	8·48	19·18	22·87	36·61
Ditto, ditto, 1862–71 .	4·44	7·62	11·29	18·21	21·81	24·13
Average of preceding, exclusive of all Depôts . , .	2·55	5·12	4·70	11·31	18·00	26·59
Ditto, ditto, 1862–71 .	2·90	5·39	7·06	12·51	17·21	19·95
Civil Male Population:						
England and Wales .	7·41	8·42	9·21	10·23	11·63	13·55
Healthy Districts .	5·83	7·30	7·93	8·36	9·00	9·86

The ratio of mortality among the troops, exclusive of those at the Depôts, was reduced at all the ages below 35, but increased at those above it. The decrease between 25 and 30, and the increase above 40 were considerable. As during the preceding year, the proportion of deaths between 25 and 30 was lower than that between 20 and 25. In the Depôts the rate of mortality was above the average at all the ages except those under 20 and between 25 and 30.

[From the above it is clear that, when men reach over thirty years of age, service in the Army is unhealthy compared with the civil population.]

On the following page will be found a tabulated statement of the influence of age on mortality in India.

On the Influence of Age on Mortality in India.

In Abstract No. 20 in the Appendix, the details are given of the strength and deaths, at different ages, of the troops serving in India in 1872. The following table shows the results, and also the average of the ten preceding years :—

	Under 20		20 and under 25		25 and under 30		30 and under 35		35 and under 40		40 and upwards	
	Strength on Jan. 1	Died	Strength on Jan. 1	Died	Strength on Jan. 1	Died	Strength on Jan. 1	Died	Strength on Jan. 1	Died	Strength on Jan. 1	Died
Bengal . . .	1,953	16	10.041	230	8,963	221	7,309	230	3,323	156	533	46
Madras . . .	754	6	2,790	45	2,203	35	2,231	57	869	33	208	16
Bombay . . .	760	5	3,474	56	2,229	42	1,377	40	733	27	134	4
Total . . .	3,467	27	16,305	331	13,305	298	10,917	327	4,925	216	875	66
Ratio of deaths per 1,000 of strength (350) . . .	7·79		20·30		22·25		29·95		43·86		75·43	
Ditto, 1862–71 . .	9·00		17·30		23·85		32·99		41·38		63·50	

[From the above it will be seen that in 1872 the death rate under 30 was at the rate of 2 per cent., whilst above that it was at the rate of $3\frac{5}{8}$ per cent. So that in that year 266 lives were lost by present system.]

IV., *p.* 18.

ACTUAL NUMBERS OF NONCOMMISSIONED OFFICERS AND MEN ON HOME SERVICE AND IN MILITIA ON 30TH NOVEMBER, 1873, AND IN INDIA AND COLONIES ON 1ST SEPTEMBER, 1873.

Home . .	90,469,	of whom	31,804	were over 30 years of age.
India . .	59,064	„	22,593	„
Colonies. .	21,538	„	6,618	„
	171,071		61,015	
Militia . .	101,087,	of whom	16,251	were under 19 years of age
			46,402	„ from 19 to 25
			22,104	„ from 25 to 30
			16,330	„ over 30
	101,087		101,087	
Add Permanent Staff . .	3,678			
	104,765			
Number at Training, 1873 . .	74,208			

No. 1 Reserve. 7,477 had not been called out for training.

Number of Recruits sent to India in year ending November 30, 1873 3,451

Number of Invalids from India 3,576

Return 67, March 26, 1874.

Average Home Army.

In Prison	1,554
In Hospital	3,357

	Home Army		Colonial	Indian	
	Militia serving at home, Non-Commissioned Officers and Men	Regular Forces maintained for Service in the United Kingdom, Non-Commissioned Officers and Men†	Non-Commissioned Officers and Men ‡	British Troops, effective strength Non-Commissioned Officers and Men of all Arms, including Invalids §	Native Troops, Non-Commissioned Officers and Men ‖
1864	110,856	75,768	57,653	67,909	128,356
1865	98,868	78,410	54,899	63,107	124,278
1866	96,185	77,717	50,962	60,293	124,789
1867	96,944	76,848	50,053	5,660	115,875
1868	103,782	85,040	45,053	56,476	116,706
1869	108,911	84,361	37,301	57,616	117,371
1870	109,040	82,472	24,196	57,067	116,188
1871	Average roundly 105,000*	94,402	25,093	58,817	115,048
1872		101,145	25,008	60,401	115,355
1873		98,719	24,092	60,545	No return
Average of last 4 years	105,000	94,000	24,500	60,000	

* No returns in continuation of above, but roundly from other data 105,000 was average.

† 'Parliamentary Return,' 367, July 30, 1873.

‡ From 'Army Abstract and Return.'

§ Appendix, page 267, 'Report East Indian Finance,' 1874.

‖ Appendix, page 910, 'Report East Indian Finance,' 1873.

V.

Recruiting and Desertion.

	Recruits joined the		Deserters Advertised for		Deserters who escaped
	Army	Militia	Army	Militia	
1864	16,323	18,700	4,889	7,577	3,079
1865	14,430	18,700	5,448	6,241	3,519
1866	15,277	18.700	5,260	3,682	3,583
1867	19,453	18,700	5,949	3,353	3,449
1868	17,060	18.700	4,609	3,619	3,011
1869	12,020	18,700	4,018	3,836	3,341
1870	24,594	18,700	4,480	3,720	3,171
1871	23,586	32,876	6,967	6,641	4,553
1872	17,791	30,154	7,653	7,663	5,860
1873	17,194	25,361	7,094	10,448*	5,800
1874	20,640	29,500	6,904	10,500	...
Average of last 5 years	20,750	27,388	6,600	7,800	5,000

* Is for the year ending 30th November, 1873.

	1873 Recruits joined these Arms of Service	1873 Deserted these Arms of Service	1874 Recruits joined these Arms of Service	1874 Deserted these Arms of Service
Cavalry . . .	2,078	944		986
Artillery . .	3,479	1,868		2,066
Engineers . .	443	131		159
Army Service .	194	57		52
Infantry . .	10,760	4,094		3,641
	16,954	7,094		6,904

VI.

The superior intelligence and ability of our British population.

Mr. Redgrave, H.M. Inspector of Factories, in his report upon the textile industries of Europe, relative to the capacity of our working classes, says—

'That while the foreigner is under the same condition as to raw material as the English manufacturer, and his fuel is more expensive, his workpeople do not work with the same vigour and steadiness as Englishmen, as the evidence that has come before me has gone to prove that there is a great preponderance in favour of this country. Comparing the work of the British with a foreign spinner, the average persons employed to spindles is—

In France	1 to 14
„ Russia	1 to 28
„ Prussia	1 to 37
„ Great Britain	1 to 74

Our competition is everywhere dreaded, and yet we pay higher wages.'

VII.

According to the census of 1871, there were in the United Kingdom 862,000 young men between the ages of 21 and 24 years.—8 per cent. is the deduction made in Prussia to find men fit for service.

The number of men in 1871 was as follows:

Age	Great Britain	Ireland
20	223,750	57,840
21	218,530	54,260
22	212,700	50,700
23	205,800	47,100
24	197,850	47,500
25	188,560	40,000
26	179,300	37,500
27	171,000	35,000
28	165,600	34,500
29	158,000	32,000
30	156,000	28,650
30 to 35	735,800	138,000

NOTE.—Although population in Ireland has not decreased in same ratio since 1861 as it did previously, these figures for 1871 are taken upon the same bases of decrease.

VIII.—The Volunteer Corps.

The following is an abstract of the Annual Returns, furnished to the War Office, of the state of Volunteer Corps as they existed on the 1st November, last.

Arm	Maximum Establishment	Supernumeraries Authorised	Efficients	Non-Efficients	Total Enrolled	Officers and Serjeants who have obtained Certificates of Proficiency	No. of Volunteers present at Annual Inspection during year ended 31st October, 1874
Light Horse	995	9	400	156	556	36	370
Artillery	42,026	649	30,827	2,723	33,550	2,773	26,184
Engineers	8,410	210	5,842	453	6,301	484	4,949
Mounted Rifles . . .	300	—	132	42	175	16	145
Rifles	183,473	2,384	122,492	10,831	133,323	10,643	106,809
	235,204	3,252	159,693	14,212	173,905	13,946	138,451
Staff of Administrative Regiments not included in the returns of any corps	1,481	—	1,407	75	1,482	203	*1,407
Grand Total . .	236,685	3,252	161,100	14,287	175,387	14,152	139,858

* Approximate.

IX.

Composition of our Home Army.

Non-Commissioned Officers and Men in each Arm of the Service at Home on the 30th Nov., 1873.

Household Cavalry	1,205
Cavalry of the Line	11,098
Royal Artillery	17,558
Royal Engineers	3,594
Foot Guards	5,611
Infantry of the Line	47,854
Army Service Corps	2,790
Army Hospital Corps	750
	90,469

Militia.

(Great Britain and Ireland.)

Artillery	12,225
Infantry and Rifles	88,862
	101,087
Yeomanry	9,981

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INDIA. *Military Expenditure*

16 000,000

Recruits Home Colonies and India 1874	*ropean roops.*	*Ages*		*Total.*
		20 to 32.	*Under 20, or over 32.*	
20 640.	2,100.	45.000	17 100.	62,100
	ish Officers itive Army &c. 3600			3.600
	E ARMY.			
29 · 500.	2.000			122.000
Total 50 · 140				187, 200

INDIA. *Military Expenditure*

16 000,000

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